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KNIGHTS OF THE PALE

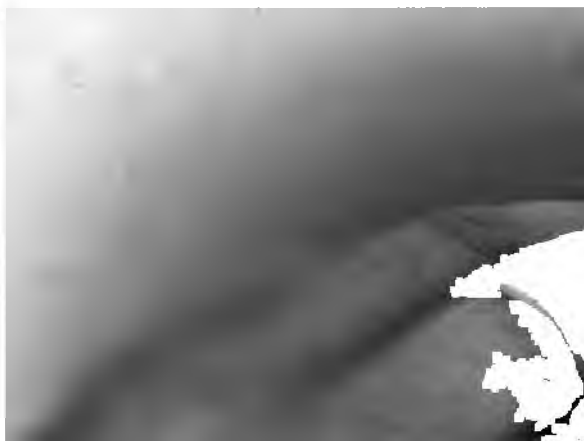
OR
IRELAND
FOUR HUNDRED YEARS AGO



GLASGOW & LONDON: CAMERON & FERGUSON.



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ST.



THE
KNIGHTS OF THE PALE;

OR,
IRELAND FOUR HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

A HISTORICAL ROMANCE.

BY
C. M. O'KEEFFE,
POLITICAL CONVICT, 2873.



"Fond girl! nor fiend nor angel he
Who woos thy young simplicity;
But one of earth's impassion'd sons,
As warm in love, as fierce in ire,
As the best heart whose current runs
Full of the day-god's living fire."—MOORE.

GLASGOW:
CAMERON & FERGUSON, 88 WEST NILE ST.
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1870,

250. r. 110.

TO

DIXON C. O'KEEFFE, ESQ.,

TEMPLEMORE, IRELAND,

This Work is Dedicated,

BY HIS AFFECTIONATE COUSIN,

C. M. O'KEEFFE.

PREFACE.

THE object of the following story is to give, as livingly as the writer's powers admit, the impression which a prolonged study of Irish antiquarian authorities, and of the publications of the "Irish Archæological Society," above all, have produced upon the author's mind—to make the belted knights, glittering in plate, speak audibly through the bars of their helmets—to make the mail-clad chiefs, bounding with passion, act visibly before the reader's eye—"to exhibit the very age and body of the time, its form, and pressure"—to raise before the reader's imagination the crenellated fortress, with its pennon waving and ruffling over its gigantic keep—in a word, to realize to the minds of the nineteenth century the aspect of warlike Ireland in the fifteenth.

Such has been my object. I may have failed; but the Irish public, I trust, will at least give me credit for good intentions.

Be that as it may, the English public at least set great value on this species of composition,—a trait in English character which has not escaped French animadversion. "Un romancier (in England) peut donc compter sur la reconnaissance de milliers de personnes influentes. Bulwer, par exemple, le romancier bien connu, est devenu ministre des colonies, éte a te mis à la retraite avec le titre de lord. Disraeli, dont les romans ont toujours fait sensation, sans être populaire est devenu malgre son

origine, le chef du parti tory, et en qualite de premier il a dirige les affaires d'une partie notable du monde civilisee." * The importance of such a work is unquestionable; the only doubt which can remain is as to the abilities of the author—a doubt which no one can feel so much as I do—which haunts and distresses my mind—so that I present my book to the public with very mixed feelings of "pleasure and trepidation."

The first suggestion or germ of this romance I derived from the learned writings of my lamented friend James Hardiman, late librarian to the Queen's College in Galway—an excellent Irishman, whose real name was Hartigan. In his admirable essay on the "Statute of Kilkenny," he says, for instance, that the legal document in question "presents a horrible picture of the state of society within the Pale." "The state of public morals," he adds, "will not be found to have improved afterwards." About that time, robbery prevailed much in England; but the most conspicuous offenders, and those who struck the greatest terror into the minds of the people, were from Ireland, and particularly from the Pale. This appears from the English statute 1st Henry VI., A.D. 1422, which ordains that "all people born in Ireland shall depart out of the realm within a month after proclamation made of this ordinance." "The entire shows," continues Hardiman, "that the depredators were English, born in Ireland; for it must be remembered that the mere Irish could have little or no intercourse at that time with England." It would appear, in short, that in those days the Pale was a kind of penal colony or Botany Bay to England, and abounded in English outlaws, "who left their country for their country's good." Their descendants, in after years, returned to Britain—as the ticket-of-leave man in modern

* *Bibliothèque de Genève*, 1869.

times returns to society—more hardened, determined, and inveterate in guilt than when they first broke the laws of society, and bade defiance to the world.

In the following story, a character is described nicknamed “the Dollaher”—a word which, as I take it, comes from *ṭuḅ*, black; *ḡall*, foreign; and *ṣeḡṣ*, a man. The first book which directed my attention to the Dollaher was written by a gifted Scotchman, named Leitch Ritchie, who in his day enjoyed considerable popularity. He wrote *Schinderhannes; or, the Robber of the Rhine, The Romance of French History*, and many other works,—among the rest, a tour in Ireland, in which he describes the Dollaher. “No city in the world is more destitute of legendary lore than Dublin,” according to Leitch Ritchie. “The metropolis of Ireland has one solitary tradition—the dim legend of the Dollaher.”

Acting on this hint, I went to work to ferret out some facts about this grim spectre of the past; and not content with discovering truth, I resolved to make it known to my fellow-countrymen. I may be sometimes dull, but I am always authentic; and though the poet speaks approvingly of “truth severe by fairy fiction dressed,” as if that rainbow garb were becoming and appropriate to the goddess, I prefer to present Truth to the public in the thin clothing which is one of the distressing necessities of a scanty wardrobe—in other words, nearly as nude as the Medicean Venus—at least, without a shred from the painted wardrobe of “fairy fiction”—“*veritas, simplex et nuda, sed quia veritas, pulcra.*”

THE
KNIGHTS OF THE PALE.

CHAPTER I.

"What black magician conjures up this fiend?"

Richard III.

"TWAS night, and in "the City of the Swords," * in the "Province of the Spears," † the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, which had so often echoed the harmonious thunder of the choir, was resting in silent repose. The obscurity that gloomed the immense interior was broken by a solitary cresset, which radiated, like some pensive star, before the magnificent altar. That altar-shrine contained the staff of miraculous potency, which, as is well attested, an angel—Victor by name—

"All burning plumes and splendours of the sky,"

had confided to the hand of St. Patrick—a staff blazing with the embellishments of Paradise. The intolerable radiance of that shining crozier had scared away those cold and venomous reptiles which once crawled over our majestic island, *Eipe airc nny na nysh.* ‡ But now the brilliant *bacal* § lay veiled and invisible in its altar-shrine. Nor this alone. The drooping banners—the numerous colonnades—the small, cloistered galleries—the well-carved statues of canonized soldiers—the groined and foliated roof—all that lent beauty, and much that imparted majesty to the edifice—were curtained in the enormous shadow of the gigantic cathedral. On the fatal night on which our memorable story commences, a young man

* Dublin.
† Leinster.

‡ Lofty Ireland, isle of kings.
§ Crozier.

stood quite alone in the bosom of that awful shadow, and seemed to muse on the volume of gloom which brooded in the vast concavity, or eyed the great window at the extremity of the long-drawn aisle, through which at times a feeble glimmer from the wintry moon faintly struggled in, as if to cheer him.

The steps and platform under the cresset and before the great altar were littered with polished armour, helmet or salet, breastplate or placard, tuiles and taces, and van-brace and cuisses, sword, lance, and shield—the paraphernalia of knighthood, on which the pious warrior was here to implore a benison. As thought chased thought through the mind of this solitary watcher, he alternately glowed with martial ardour, or saddened with misgiving, as his eye fell on these knightly accoutrements. His heart, that had throbbed so feverishly for the loud fragor of crashing lances—"man to man, and horse to horse"—shrank back at times from the purity and splendour of the "Order," as if scared by it. Such misgiving was inevitable in his situation. During two-and-twenty hours the postulant (as he was termed) had not tasted food; and this prolonged abstinence had saddened his mind and depressed his spirits, and cast over every object which engaged his attention a dark and funereal shade. Had he, indeed, he asked himself, those knightly virtues which the warriors of the Cross were expected to possess? Or was he even exempt from the stains and vices which entailed shame on the knight, and brought scandal on the order? Were there not many fierce ebullitions of hate, pride, and revenge, of which he could accuse himself? That symbol of purity—the white tunic which draped his person—seemed silently to ask him if he were indeed pure. Nor was this all. That emblem of the red blood which the trumpet of the rear-lorn hope might summon him to shed in some disastrous battle—his crimson surcoat—made him unhappy. He doubted much if he really possessed that unfinishing fortitude which he might be called on one day to exercise, when, unhorsed, unfriended, and in chains, he stood a prisoner on some dismal field of ill-fated war. He half-scorned himself as a hypocrite for thus seeking, in this magnificent cathedral—whose multiplied niches were

studded with holy warriors and sainted kings—a dignity of which he was unworthy. In the course of these reflections, the postulant, though lost in thought, became dimly aware, in an indescribable manner, that some mysterious visitant was smelling about him, skulking, prowling, and perusing him through the gloom. At least, he fancied so. But he remembered that prolonged abstinence from food gives hallucinations to the cheated senses, and the suspicion might originate in hallucination. But again he felt—profoundly felt—indeed, was quite certain—that the sound of a stealthy footfall on the flags smote his awakened ear. His heart throbbed at the conviction that this was not to be wondered at; for the dismal and lonely chancel ground teemed with the mouldering remains of many a good knight, whose perturbed ghost might flit and roam in the giant shadow of the cathedral. He crossed himself, as he recollected that the neighbouring earth was studded with sepulchres, which, at the solemn hour of midnight, slowly and horribly yawned, as all Dublin affirmed, to vomit noiselessly their sheeted tenants.

These thoughts produced a cold shudder in the ingenious youth, who, gazing into the darkness, became conscious that a breathing being—whatever it might be—returned his gaze. A thrill, icy cold, palsied his heart. His hair rose on end, as he yielded to the awful suspicion that he had not a human, but a supernatural, companion. He suddenly and desperately gave expression to these conflicting feelings, by exclaiming, in a scranell voice, “In God’s name, avaunt! Who be’st thou?” The conviction, as he uttered these words, became intensely strong that the mysterious being at which his whole nature revolted was drawing nearer and nearer, as if invited by his exclamation, though in that approach its motion was noiseless.

“In the name of God, what have we here?” By way of answer a heavy hand was laid upon his shoulder, and a hairy and horrible visage, which almost brushed his face, was thrust revoltingly close to his retreating countenance. The snout was large and prominent, the brow low and slanting, the eye keen and inquisitive, and the head

thatched with a dense mass of long disordered hair, resembling a hay-stack.

"How now! what make thee here, churl? What profane wretch be'st thou?" exclaimed the perturbed youth, as by a sudden effort he wrested himself free from the vice-like clutch of his demon-like visitor.

The stranger, rather thinking aloud than replying, exclaimed, by way of accounting for his presence, while a low gruff chuckle accompanied his hoarse words, "No bacon is to be saved but Sir Fridayface's, forsooth? No other paudreens,* my holy lamb? None but knights and squires may walk the black dog? The budha's† skillet is not to be scoured? Only gentles shall tell their beads? Heaven's a place of fashionable resort? No old hemp is to mallet his craw, forsooth?"

While speaking thus, the stranger contrived to shift his position, in order to see what manner of man he had to deal with. For this purpose he managed to turn his back to the light, so that the rays of the pendant cresset fell on the excited visage of our novice in arms, while a shadow lay like a veil on his own. The stranger perceived, by a rapid perusal of the youth's countenance, that he was not to be cowed. He therefore dismissed his first ferocious intention of bullying him, and resolved to act on his simplicity, for the sufficient reason that he could not act upon his fears.

The sinewy and bony form which confronted the knight was belted with a girdle of green withes, or twisted osiers, from which hung a large straight sword, pointed and tempered to pierce mail, and sheathed in a brilliant scabbard. In the dim light of the cathedral, he presented a grotesque, misshapen appearance: he seemed a tall, raw-boned losel, with an ugly face, and a certain meagre lankness about the abdomen, which reminded the knight of a greyhound. Such an appearance was not by any means true; but the knight's imagination combined with the darkness to produce on his senses an amorphous and erroneous impression of the stranger. It was evident, from the bearing of the latter, from the very tones of his voice, and a certain nervous

* Chaplots,

† Plebeians.

tremulousness characterizing him, that he had recently passed through scenes of terrific excitement. It occurred to the youth very forcibly, that while he himself had been indulging in reverie, the stranger had glided into the church like a spectre, to which yawning walls and noiseless doors yield spontaneous admission. His right hand grasped that royal weapon the axe, which, half unconsciously, while eyeing the youth, he swung to and fro as if it were a pendulum. As he could glide over the earth without sound, the knight doubted more and more if he were human. To make amends, the knight cherished a persuasion popular at the period, that demons—fork-footed and hueless-faced like his companion—were as vulnerable as men, it being well proven that, when “fields were fought in heaven,” the mal-feasant soldier, Lucifer, had been unhorsed by the good Red Cross knight St. Michael. This was unquestionable, and its recollection animated our young postulant with the hope of winning honour from this weird adventure. To solve this mystery, he demanded, in a somewhat uncertain voice, “Whom be’st thou, villain, and how hast thou found inlet into this sacred fane?”

Looking hard at his questioner, from under his beetling brows, to see if he could be duped, the stranger was very slow to answer. He seemed suddenly afflicted with deafness or deeply absorbed in thought. He was really thinking—horrible thought!—how easily he might, with mortal strength, cleave the youth to the chin; scatter his brains in a shower of blood over the pavement with his “thin-edged thooa.”* It would be only the work of a minute to brandish it and brain him. While clutching his axe, shortening his sinewy hold of the ashen handle, which had been curtailed in length, and thus made more fit for close fight, he glared on the youth as “the lank-sided wolf” glares on its fleecy and innocent victim. He meditated a bound and a blow, which, to one who like him was master of his weapon, it would be unnecessary to repeat. At one and the same moment his eye was kindling—his mind calculating the profits and loss of homicide—while his con-

* Axe.

vulvise gripe was almost crushing the shaft of his axe. At length, after a long pause, the intruder (without moving the fixed and searching glance which perused the ingenuous visage of the youth) pointed carelessly, by way of answer, to a lofty and half-ruined aperture in the highest part of the edifice, through which, at that moment, a gleam of moonlight happened to penetrate. His skinny lips were curled by a sneer of mockery, as if the villain were amused by the frank amazement of his astonished companion, as the youth faltered out, "What, fellow, hath made thee run such deadly hazard?"

"A trifle," replied the sallow intruder at length, quickening the motion of his pendulous axe, as much as to say, This is the cause. Ere he could discern a favourable opportunity to accomplish the murderous purpose that lurked deep in his atrocious mind, and gleamed in his savage eye—or ere he could shake himself free from the clutch of the tempter, urging him almost irresistibly to the commission of crime at what he deemed an inauspicious moment—while his mind was like a field of battle—he was startled, as it were with a trumpet, by an event which, far from allowing him thought, or time, or breath, to menace the safety of others, made him fly in terror to secure his own.

At this moment he listened, he started, and turned ghastly white as a corpse. He made a few hasty steps, as if preparing to fly, and then, palpitatingly pausing, he cagerly and breathlessly listened in an indescribable gasping manner. A remote bellow, faintly reverberating from some street far off, caught his strained hearing. He seemed to analyze the sounds, as if he could glean from the clamour by what lips they were uttered. The sounds were obviously nearing the cathedral. It seemed as if a human and speaking tide, a vast surge of men, was flowing and roaring towards him. Accents of exasperation, grief, and fury, blended with hostile screams, rose clamouring from every side, and were fast and audibly converging towards the cathedral. He seemed at his wits' end. Alternately vigilant and stupified, and internally torn by agonizing throes, he appeared to shrink into himself, while he gaped around with pale looks, as if tremblingly craving

security from the inclosing walls of the massive structure. His agitation cannot be described, as the thickening and terrible hubbub, the swelling roar of the external tumult, came surging and rioting round the building like a bursting flood that breaks in thunder on a craggy sea-coast. Soon the clattering and pounding of clubs and quarter-staves—showers of desperate blows rained fiercely on the rebelling panels—the redoubled thunderings of a screaming multitude reverberating dully and solemnly through the vast cathedral—rendered it perfectly obvious that the sanctuary was beleaguered by an irreverent and furious multitude, swarming and vociferous, and perspiringly eager to break in. Meantime the terrible tumult startled the reverend canons and gownsmen from their pallets, who, pale and full of anxiety, came in confused and hasty groups, streaming in to where the knight was watching his arms. In a moment clambering up the walls, some were clinging to emblazoned windows, and gazing at the huddled crowd, which rose, and roared, and struggled to beat its way with main force in among them, like an exasperated giant. Soon the universal out roar of the tumultuous citizens, "*Amac leish! amac leish!* send him forth! send him forth! out with him! out with him!" a thousand times repeated, seemed to ring and reverberate through the rocking city. Ere long the mellow tones of a gigantic bell, whose iron tongue was swung by the agitated hand of a half-frenzied friar, was heard in reply. The alarming intimation wafted from that lofty bell-turret called forth a chorus of responsive sounds, stroke following stroke, from all the steeple-towers of the metropolis, and soon the sonorous bell of the Knights of St. John, louder than all, was

"Swinging slow with sullen roar."

The Knights of Kilmainham were astir, and the atmosphere of Dublin was alive with the bray of trumpets, and the neighing of chargers, and the echo of war-cries.

CHAPTER II.

“Denn nicht geheur ist's hier; ein böses wesen,
 Hat seinen wohnsitz unter diesem baum,
 Schon seit der alten grauen heidenzeit.”—SCHILLER.

HAVING described the candidate for knighthood (or $\gamma\mu\alpha\tau\eta$ $\gamma\alpha\mu\gamma\epsilon$,* as the Irish termed it), who, in the dusky aisles of the lofty cathedral, was watching his arms, and preparing for inauguration the following day; and having likewise described the murderer dripping with blood, who, battle-axe in hand, took refuge in the church to escape the rage and fury of the people; we shall now, with the reader's permission, issue from the consecrated edifice, and, mingling with the exasperated multitude, learn from their brawling how this “savage from the hills,” as they termed him, this “rascal kern” whom they had hunted through their streets, had incurred their “mortal mislike.”

In the immediate vicinity of the cathedral, in which the Dollaher—for so he was named—was safely skulking, a lamp, placed in the public street and lighted by pious hands, was blazing at the feet of a stiff and clumsy image of the Virgin. The light of the lamp fell on a hirsute and vociferous group, who, heedless of the holy figure overhead, were eagerly discussing the history of the Dollaher.

“Did you ever hear what he did at the Castle of Turvey?” asked a bleary-eyed jongleur, as the English termed him—a $\gamma\epsilon\alpha\mu\text{-}\eta\alpha\text{-}\sigma\sigma\epsilon\sigma$, as the Irish called him—who managed to combine with the profession of a harper the avocation of a carrier of news. He had lanthorn jaws, flabby hollow cheeks, and a thin gray beard. His red eyes peered obliquely through his bleared eyelids, while his bushy eyebrows beetled above them like the bristles of a boar. Fuvroac (such was his name) stooped under the burden of his well-worn $\sigma\mu\mu\tau$, or harp, which was secured to his shoulders by a greasy strap of well-tanned deerskin. Years, which had stiffened his limbs, had augmented the

* $\gamma\mu\alpha\tau\eta$, love; $\gamma\alpha\mu\gamma\epsilon$, of arms; the *gais* of classic authors; pronounced *raw goshga*.

nimbleness of his tongue. His physical powers, like a vanquished army retreating before the advance of Time, were concentrated in his organs of speech. He seemed the incarnation of impotent garrulity. His darling subject of conversation was the *síghs* or fairies. He had often seen them, knew their names, and had resided in their caverns, where he received elfin instructions in handling the harp. It was whispered that a *riðe 340rðe*, or fairy breeze, a magic wind which swept over him while asleep on the green grass, had wafted away his intellect one fine summer's day, rendering him "bird-witted."

"Did you ever hear what he did at the Castle of Turvey?"

"No!" exclaimed several at once, animated by a devouring appetite for news—an article which Fuvrooac delighted to furnish. He was a vocal journal—a reporter whose memory was his note-book—whose news, though sometimes wanting in truth, were often better than true—they abounded in interest.

"I'll tell you, I'll tell you," crowed out Fuvrooac, apprehensive apparently of being forestalled. "He was confined with seven chains—*seven chains*—in the upper room of a tower two hundred feet high: one chain round the villain's neck, two on his legs, four on his arms, and three round his waist. That's seven."

"That's more than seven," gruffly observed an arithmetician who happened to join the crowd.

"No, it's not," exclaimed Fuvrooac tartly, as if he were nettled by this accusation.

"I say it is," repeated the arithmetician.

"I say it is not," answered the jongleur.

"What matter? what matter?" exclaimed the crowd good-naturedly, unwilling to be balked in a meal so satisfactory, by the want of so trifling an ingredient as numerical exactitude.

"That's seven," reiterated the waspish minstrel, raising his voice and emphasizing his words, as if firmly determined that it should be seven.

"Is it one on his neck, and four on his legs, and three round his waist, and two on his arms? Is that what you call seven?"

"That is not what I said at all," screamed the minstrel, exasperated by this uncalled-for contradiction. "I said four on his arms; not four on his legs."

"Does it not come to the same thing?" asked the arithmetician. "Is not four, four? whether it be on his legs or arms. Does it not come to the same thing? Tell the story rightly, or don't tell it at all."

"Maybe you had better tell it."

"Wait a minute!"

"Did you not say it was seven?" asked the arithmetician.

"Yes, I did," answered the jongleur.

"And now you say it's ten!"

"The word ten never issued from my lips," cried the minstrel, looking round in triumph.

"Ah! what matter, man?" exclaimed a bystander.

"Never mind, never mind," cried a third.

"Go on, go on," vociferated the residue, justly displeased at this vainglorious display of superfluous accomplishment on the part of the arithmetician.

"Well," resumed the minstrel—"well, as I was saying, one day he was visited by three boys, the sons of Lord Barnewall, and two striplings besides—six boys in all. One was the son of the lord of the castle, and the remainder his two grandsons, being there for education, and who applied to the imprisoned robber for arrows, with which he was wont to supply them. One day this villain being, at the request of the children, brought forth from his dungeon, took advantage of the absence of the janitor, and locked himself up with the boys. A great clamour instantly arose, as well from the boys within, as from the servitors without; the boys screaming because, as they vociferated, he was preparing to murder them, and the men-at-arms bellowing because they could not prevent the murder, though they heard the heavy blows he gave the screaming youths. Nor did he cease, with an uplifted axe, to threaten the lives of the children, until indemnity and security were assured him in the most solemn manner."

"*I am told,*" exclaimed a bystander, "that his mother *openly avowed what he is.*"

"What's that? what's that?" was simultaneously vociferated by several voices.

"And being questioned earnestly who he was, and put to the rack before the chief justiciary, he confessed he was the son of a Broohy's * wife, his father being a demon in the likeness of her husband."

"Oh, mother of mercies!" exclaimed a fourth, "was ever anything like that?"

The crowd for a minute or two, as if digesting this important information, was mute and meditative.

"Hearken to me, good Christians," said an elderly man with a ~~plea~~^{staff}, or staff, in his hand; "I heard him avow what he is!"

"You did!" inquired several, in the shrill tones of alarm.

"I did indeed." Here the old fellow dropped his voice, and his eager and silent auditors huddled nearer to him and to one another. "It happened one day when he was living in his doohie, † the subject of conversation was, praises to His name, the incarnation of Him who saved us; and he said, in the hearing of myself and three more, what may show you who he is, if you are not deaf to reason. 'Before our Redeemer assumed human nature,' said one of the three men, 'the demons had great power.' 'They had, indeed,' says he, quite melancholy, 'which at His coming was much diminished,' says he, 'interrupting us, insomuch that we were scattered and driven to every side,' says he; 'some in their terror threw themselves in the sea,' says he; 'others hid themselves in old trees, or cugged into rocky nooks; and for my part,' says he, 'for my part,' says he—mark the words, these were the very words—'I leaped into a well,' says he; on which he blushed crimson for shame, and was gone in a whiff. He disappeared from before us."

"He did?"

"As sure as you are a living man, he did," repeated the wandsman, striking the earth with his staff, while the knot of men grouped around him crossed themselves reverentially.

"Lord keep us!" slowly repeated a youth with a cheery

* Broohy, a peasant.

† Doohie, district.

complexion, as if finally comprehending the truth; "He's not a man!"

"No more than you are an eagle," repeated the old fellow, striking his *pears*, or staff, triumphantly against the ground. "He's a pale, lean carcass, quickened by a fiend."

"Do you not wonder?" asked a small black fellow, whose countenance was blank with amazement, "how he can have the power to go into the church, and the blessed staff in it and all." The speaker was a *peapoon* by profession; that is, he vaticinated the future by wisely inspecting the palm of the hand. There is no mode of investigating futurity so truly philosophic as this; because it is the hands, and particularly the fingers, which determine the fate of the majority of men. It is the use we make of what the tragic poet sublimely terms "pickers and stealers,"* that makes us happy or miserable, rich or poor, slaves or freemen; and therefore the inspection of the great instrument of fortune is the natural resource of philosophic diviners.

"Oh! he has power for a time," replied the other with a toss of the head, "but it will not last long."

"What aspect hath the Dollaher? How is he shaped?"

"A horrible shape! He hath the frame of a man, but all the hinder parts of an ox, from the ankles of the legs, and the wrists of the arms; his head all bald, saving a few small, thin hairs; his eyes great, round, and black, like an ox. I saw him when he did resort to the house of Maurice Fitzgerald daily about dinner; and if meat was given him, he took it up in his hoofs, and so fed himself." Here the speaker looked knowingly aside, thrust out the extremity of his tongue, and winked his left eye, at which some of the bystanders tittered; but the majority were too earnest to smile.

"I have been told," resumed the old *peap-ua-tee*, "that whensoever the Dollaher (who's in the church there now) sets foot upon the earth, the voice of a man, loud, terrible, and hoarse, issues from the depths of the ground like muffled thunder, and screams and threatens him with awful malisons."

* Hamlet.

"That's the afflicted ghost of some one he killed," observed a bystander, in the low hoarse voice of fear, his eyes at the same time expanded by terror.

"That's it! that's it!" exclaimed several voices at the same moment.

"Folks say as how he has seven men's strength. They say, too, that if a bag of apples be pitched upon his head, not one will fall to the ground, but all stick upon his monstrous skull, that bristles all over with the thorns of a hedgehog in lieu of hair."

"That tallies mainly wi' what I hear, and that his shins be sharp as any pole-axe, and his hams twisted the wrong way."

"What meanest thou by wrong way, man?"

"Why, the back part foremost, and the fore part backward, to be sure."

"Maybe he's the phooka," interposed one much wiser than the others.

"If all we hear be true, he must be any woman's fancy that takes a liking to him," observed a burly gallowglass, with a sage air of solemn deliberation.

Enlightened by this discussion, which in point of philosophy could be equalled only in the British House of Lords, when Irish affairs are under consideration, the reader must now be thoroughly acquainted with the Dollaher. The discussion having been alike lucid and satisfactory, the information of the reader must be at once accurate and extensive. Should his mind continue by some strange fatality obfuscated by any mistiness or darkness, let him boldly follow us into the next chapter, where, discarding vulgar babble, we shall speak in our own person. Our readers will therefore do well to give deep attention to what we are about to tell them, which is sure to be characterized by all that wisdom which abounds in the writings, but is often entirely absent from the conduct, of authors.

It may not be generally known, but it is perfectly true, that the man who reserves his good sense for verbal purposes, who does not waste it in action, or fritter it away in selfish pursuits, is always worth hearing. This is the great secret of the popularity of the great teachers of mankind. Homer and Socrates had not a shoe to their foot,

and yet they instructed the world. This was owing to the reservation in question. They wasted none of their wisdom in action, but kept it all for the use of their neighbours. Their pockets were empty, while their heads were full of sound reflection. They benefited mankind by abstaining from doing anything which could benefit or enrich themselves.

CHAPTER III.

"No demon of the waste,
No churchyard ghoul caught glimmering in the light
Of the blest sun, e'er blasted human sight
With lineaments so foul, so fierce as those."—*Lalla Rookh*.

THE terrors awaked by the Dollaher originated in a circumstance very remarkable. Every one is aware that a tender respect or veneration for the dead is a marked trait in the Irish character. Foreigners do not appreciate or understand this sentiment; but it always seemed to us to spring from that tender commiseration for the helpless which is a prominent characteristic of generous, noble, and valiant hearts. But be its origin or nature what it may, it certainly exists: the Irish entertain a deep respect for the departed.

Now, in the precincts of Dublin, some years before the opening of our story, this pious feeling of reverential sympathy with the dead received a violent shock. One morning, the people of Dublin discovered in one of their cemeteries some open graves, from which, during the darkness of night, the sheeted dead had been dragged forth and torn into fragments. The city, as a consequence, was scandalized, babbling and clamorous, and filled with conflicting passions—pity, anger, horror, grief, and rage. Nor was the outrage singular. It occurred more than once. Again and again graves were torn open, and the human remains rent into bloody flakes, which heaped and strewed the margin, as if some wild beast, after preparing a gory feast, had departed without devouring it. This

seemed the more perplexing, as the opening was not apparently effected with a spade, but scraped out by the claws of a quadruped. To discover and destroy this wild beast, lurking in darkness and affrighting the city, it was resolved by the town council that an archer should be placed in the churchyard. In spite of ten thousand rumours with which the busy tongues of superstitious gossipers cowed the ordinary guardsmen, an archer was found intrepid enough to undertake the office. Night after night he lurked and watched in the cemetery, but discovered nothing; unbroken silence and solitude reigned in the calm resting-place of the dead; and when the gray morning light fell on the grass-grown mounds, he found them still undisturbed. But the same day, and, indeed, almost at the same moment, the city was thrown into consternation by the awful news that another churchyard in a different district had been violated during the night, the graves ripped up, and the corpses horribly mangled. In this second cemetery the town council placed a second sentinel, and the desecration immediately ceased. Months passed away, and nothing occurred; and finally the archers, one after another, were noiselessly withdrawn. The citizens fancied themselves relieved from this horrible visitation, and were beginning to forget it, when they were suddenly distressed and startled by the renewal of the cowardly outrages in a more appalling form. After alternations of this kind repeatedly occurring, and months of exemption rolled away, which lulled the citizens into security, only to be followed by startling instances of desecration which appalled and horrified them, a *bojártojt*,* from Ormond, named Thigue Butler, was lured by guerdons in hand, and promised rewards in the future, to watch the graves. Thigue was remarkable for keenness of vision, sureness of aim, and intrepidity of courage. He was armed in the Irish fashion. His quiver was small; his bow (different from that of England and Dublin) was little more than three-quarters of a yard long, and strung with wreathed hemp. His arrows, tipped with steel, were slender and bearded, and about half an ell in length, and

* Bowman.

though shot forth weakly, entered deeply and cruelly into man or horse.

Thigue was not many nights on guard, when he descried a shapeless mass moving in the darkness. He fired, and a scream of agony attested the sureness of his aim. Thigue rushed upon his quarry with the rapidity of lightning; but the fugitive, more rapid than the archer, clambered over the wall and disappeared.

It so happened that a day or two subsequently, a friar, skilful in surgery, who was attached to an Infirmary situated in a convent near Oxmantown Green, received an application from a *stocah*, or horse-boy, belonging to Lord Gormanstown. The horse-boy limped with difficulty into the presence of the physician, and when the wounded limb was touched, shrieked with mortal agony. In a drunken squabble, a *rcj4n*,* he said, had been plunged into his flesh by the mortal strength of a savage rival, who, stimulated by jealousy, thirsted for his blood. This story, however, was utterly discredited by the friar, because a portion of the weapon, he averred, lay buried in the wound. Therefore, as the gowned physician confidently affirmed, it could not be a *rcj4n*—a species of weapon which never breaks in the flesh. With the aid of the probe and knife, the Infirmaryman extracted from the limb the small head of an Irish arrow, keen, slender, and barbed. This circumstance reached the ears of Thigue Butler, who repaired to the convent, and begged permission to see the arrow-head. He recognized it at once as his own, and affirmed that it was the very arrow-head which he had discharged in the churchyard at some mysterious object moving in the nocturnal gloom.

At length, it became manifest that the perpetrator of those horrible outrages, which made all Dublin shudder, was no other than this wounded *rc6c4rh*. Indeed, he confessed as much himself, declaring after a time that he could not account for the sacrileges, or tell why he perpetrated such unheard-of deeds. He only knew that he felt a periodical longing—an irresistible inclination urging him with such force, that he could not suppress it—to hurry

* *rcj4n*, poignard.

into the churchyard, to squat behind the tombs, to tear the dead from the graves, and rend them into pieces. It was a horrible propensity, which gave him, he said, unspeakable delight, inexpressible pleasure. This was the most extraordinary portion of his confession. But it was all that could be wrung from him. No amount of torture could induce him to say more.

Of course, the phenomenon was easily accounted for by the reverend friars. It was an evil spirit, they said, which seized upon the stocah, worked him into fury, and propelled him into sacrilege. This was the more certain, they said, as strange voices were heard to issue from the man's extremities. Nay, one day a terrified Infirmarian, with awe and horror, heard him holding in a solitary cell a conversation with his own foot, from which a voice was heard to issue as audibly as from the stocah's lips. This strange voice sometimes addressed him from the roof, hovered round him, or hung in the wall, and rated and cursed him as he turned his face to the wainscot. The evil spirit, as it was termed, was exorcised by a friar famous for his thaumaturgy, and compelled to fly or turn mute,—at least it was heard no more. Meantime, the patient was persuaded to comply with his religious duties. The aerial or internal voices ceased to tempt or distress him. His wound healed, his disposition calmed, and in spite of his avowed crimes, he was growing into something like favour with the friars, when he suddenly vanished. He disappeared during the night, as some asserted, by the aid of his *leannan rígh*,* or, as others maintained, of the lay brother, a clansman of the Butlers, who carried the keys and let him out. This, however, might be mere scandal; and as it was never clearly demonstrated, the reader, if he will, may reject it as apocryphal.

After all, there is no certainty that the "stocah" was identical with the Dollaher; and the fabric of theory which we have boldly built upon this flimsy hypothesis may be blown away in an instant by the warm breath of hostile criticism. Indeed, we feel some qualms of conscience as we commit it to paper, and tremble lest it should turn out,

* *leannan rígh*, familiar elf.

in the course of our story, that we have hereby done the Dollaher grievous wrong. We implore the reader, therefore, to hold his judgment in suspense, until we have made further inquiries, and cleared away by investigation the hazy clouds which have long settled down upon this misty tradition. There may not be a word of truth in the surmise; and as we have no object in writing but the attainment and diffusion of truth, it would give us great pain to lead our readers into error. One observation we shall make, and then hasten on with our narrative.

The stories of ghouls and vampires, prevalent in eastern Europe, seem to prove that a mysterious passion for lurking in cemeteries, and tearing and mangling human flesh, is no unexampled phenomenon. Nor is it unknown in the west. In Paris, in 1848, an instance of this kind occurred, which filled the papers with dissertations, the public with astonishment, and roused the puzzled attention of the French Faculty; leaving the subject, of course, after a thousand explanations, involved in the same impenetrable mystery which hung over it from the beginning.

CHAPTER IV.

“ I envy them, those monks of old ;
Their prayers they said, their beads they told,
To human frailties dead and cold,
And all life's vanities.”—JAMES.

FORSAKING the street which selvaged the cathedral, we shall once more plunge into its dim and shadowy aisles.

While the thunder of repeated blows, dashed upon the groaning gate by its earnest and exasperated assailants, boomed dully through the solemn aisles, a gentler group assembled in the centre of the edifice. It consisted of pale and anxious gownsmen, who, when speaking, seemed to shudder with fear or cold. The refugee who had brought them from their pallets, and for whose blood the furious multitude outside were ravening, stood calm and sullen in *the centre of this ring* of ecclesiastics. He still trifled

with his swinging axe, and was girt with his magnificent sword—his toaster, as he termed it—by a twisted cincture of green withes.

"Unfortunate wretch!" exclaimed Dean Quatriot (or Cotharot, as his brethren named him)—"flagitious sinner, what horrible enormities hast thou heaped upon thine old atrocities, that the infuriate people rise out and hunt thee in this perilous fashion, as thou wert a wild boar?"

While the dean spoke thus, his eyes expanded in alarm, and he mechanically made hurried signs of the cross, as if carefully warding off the unhallowed influence which he believed to radiate from the weird person of the Dollaher.

"You're Father Out-throat, I believe! ain't you?" asked the Dollaher drawlingly, and eyeing him with a slow, sullen glance of his pig's eyes, in which there was a depth of unutterable meaning. "Look at this! Mind what I say," he added, with a significant gesture of the hand, at the same time snapping his fingers, and accompanying the gesture with a knowing wink; "mind what I say. All your cag-mag is not worth that!"—alluding to the crackling noise which he produced with the extremity of his fingers.

Indignant at the vulgar impudence and contumacious conduct of the man, another clergyman, losing all patience with the Dollaher, vociferated, "Kneel down, thou anathematized wretch! kneel down before thy thorn-crowned Saviour! kneel down, thou worst of men, before that holy crucifix, whose solemn and thrilling voice resounded through this church, when it withered a robber like thee—but not so bad as thou—into speechless terror, and which will speak to thee some day, thou abhorred wretch, and cow thee and condemn to the everlasting fires of hell!"

One of the most extraordinary phenomena that human nature presents, is the power with which one mind sometimes acts upon another. This mysterious energy is recognized, though not satisfactorily explained, by mesmerism. Let one powerful mind be profoundly affected or convinced, and it communicates to other minds its feeling or conviction, with a force almost irresistible, rapidly as lightning, and independently of words. *This is the great secret of the successful missionary, advocate, or*

orator. He seems to ride on and rule the minds of his hearers. Embalmed in the glowing pages of the eloquent Livy and the rose-crowned Virgil, we detect this very force latent during ages, but still ever ready to rush out at the touch of erudition, like the genii in the phial rising at the touch of the fisherman. Earnestness, sincerity, conviction, are elements of power; and it is their absence which makes preaching, acting, literature, and the arts, dreary and monotonous. Owing to the profound conviction of Fr. Quatriot, rather than his eloquence, the Dollaher felt uneasy and uncomfortable. The allusion to the mysterious and awful crucifix thrilled and cowed him; his emotion was something intolerable; his lips for a minute or two writhed strangely or trembled; a ghastly whiteness overspread his hard and rueful features. But he did not yield. He resembled that sublime demon, described by Milton, who resolves to remain unchanged; having

"the unconquerable will
And study of revenge; immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield."

By a sudden and powerful effort he recovered himself, and crushed the agonizing feelings within him into temporary quietude. But instead of kneeling piously like a penitent to pray, the Dollaher stretched himself slowly like a brute, to repose on the floor. This circumstance inspired the clergymen with additional courage and zeal. They renewed their attack with intrepid confidence when they had him down. Finally, the Dollaher, pestered by their pious importunities, became perfectly savage, and sought, in the loudness of his roar, to drown his own remorse, as he vociferated, "What are you talking about at all? I never heard of such a thing. Are you in earnest?"

"I am perfectly in earnest," replied Father Quatriot.

"I never heard of such a thing! Do you mean to tell me," he asked in wonder—"do you mean to tell me that killing a man is a sin? Eh? Do you mean to tell me that?"

"The greatest of all sins, you unfortunate wretch! the greatest of all sins, when it is intentional, you miserable miscreant!"

"I never heard of such a thing, and I do not believe a

word of it," said the Dollaher; and he resumed the prostrate position from which for a moment he had half-risen to bellow these words. He stretched himself again.

The clergymen were perfectly aghast. They accounted, however, for this awful avowal in a moment by ascribing it to the teaching of their rivals, the native Irish clergy, whom they inveighed against with caustic severity. Pestered by their importunate zeal, the Dollaher finally bleated a reply to their mistimed remarks on the alleged heinousness of homicide.

"Ub-ub-bub-bub-a-boo! Was he never to die?" the Dollaher asked in a grating voice, and with an air of savage recklessness, extending his long shanks, sheathed in plaid, as he spoke. "I have it from a holy man in Patrick Street, that we must all die sometime. It was no angel I felled with the cypyn* in my hand. We'll all be dead in a hundred years' time!" and the ruffian darted a black scowl of hardened ferocity at the shrinking clerics, which might be interpreted, "Some of *you* will die sooner."

"If I knocked a few years from his sneaking life, it's a great matter! Isn't it?" he continued, with a hoarse grunt or gleeful chuckle. "Could he live for ever? I slew no immortal, I believe, Father Cut-throat. Nathless, I'll surely pay down his eric honestly, whatever it amount to; that is," he added, as if his conscience scrupled the liberality of his tongue, while he emphasized the words, "when I can afford it—though small is the eric† the c14103‡ was worth—bad luck to him."

"Thine eric, churl?" exclaimed Father Salmon, in a voice of alarm. "That is one of thine Irish abominations. Ugh! thou bearded barbarian! Anathema maranatha upon thy brood, thou Irish dog! Confusion and shame upon thy murderous spawn!"

"I am no Irish dog," said the Dollaher slowly; "I am no boglander. I am true English! I lock my door at meal-times."

"Thou hast the head of an Irish dog; so shalt thou wear the hemp of an Irish traitor; dog's law, thou vile

* Cippus, a stick.

† Eric, a fine.

‡ C14103, a black insect or cockchafer.

CHAPTER V.

"Back, on your lives!
 Cowards!—damned treacherous cowards!—back, I say;
 Do you not know me? Look upon me. Do you know
 The honest sword I brandish? Would you now
 Feel its shrewd coldness in your quaking selves?"

Damon and Pythias.

THE obstreperous townsmen meantime continued to vociferate, "The Dollaher! the Dollaher! out with him! thrust him forth! The Dollaher! We want the Dollaher!"—vociferations to which the blows of a hundred quarter-staves on the portals lent a forcible emphasis. On a sudden, the great valves of the cathedral were flung open, with grating hinges and thunderous clatter, and the novice knight stood alone, lance in hand, before the struggling and tumultuous multitude. "How now, you rascal-ribald!" he exclaimed—"wherefore all this din?" The crowd became immediately motionless, silent, and attentive. "Wit ye well," continued the knight, "here lieth the man ye quest for, and no other man, save I and the gownsmen. Now, starvelings, come and take him, an ye dare."

This invitation to advance seemed to be misunderstood by the crowd, for they fell back a little. They seemed slightly discomposed by the fearless accents of the fiery youth, and the terrors of his knightly weapon. After a pause, "Sir Knight," exclaimed the spokesman of the mob in a tone of expostulation, "we know you, sir. We would have you to wit he's no Christian man. He's a monster. Turn him out. He's the Dollaher, sir." "Let him be as he may," answered the knight, "I would ye to wit, every man is free on this consecrated floor."

"What sheer folly it is!" bellowed a fellow in the rear of the mob, whose courage (being precisely equal to his distance from the point of danger) was susceptible of mathematical measurement, "to misspend time here cabaling with this snipe; why don't ye rush in and chain him with a thousand chains?"

By way of answering this doughty suggestion, the

noble youth, shortening his clutch of his lance, and placing it on his hip, with the action of a man who handles a matchlock, charged upon the multitude, precipitating the huddled crowd down the stony steps in scrambling confusion. The cries of the falling men of "greasy aprons, rules, and hammers," as they tumbled promiscuously down the steps, heels-over-head, were answered from the remotest extremity of their mass by cries and screams louder and more appalling. These terrifying cries were occasioned by the appearance of the Knights of St. John, who, mounted upon massive and obedient chargers, and hooded in mail and sheathed in plate, with the red cross blazoned on their surcoats, came sweeping sword in hand, in threes, and charged upon the citizens as fiercely as if they were Saracens. The yielding people giving way, like bending corn before the whirlwind, were swept at once into nooks and alleys, where fugitives could not be pursued, disappearing like chaff; while the grim knights, deliberately wheeling their foaming chargers, drew up before the church gate.

The moment the knights appeared in the vicinity of the church, the palpitating clergymen took courage, and assembled boldly to consult as to what were best to be done in this awful conjuncture. The truth was, they shuddered with fear at the formidable idea of having this miscreant-fugitive, dripping with blood, skulking in their dim aisles: their lives were not safe in his vicinity. 'Twere best to have him seized and delivered up to the Knights of St. John; but to seize the Dollaher would be like taking a wolf by the ears. There was no knowing what he might do. The priests were sadly puzzled. He might rob the altar; he might, as the laity said, be no Christian man after all, but a fiend. In that case he might (spreading his "sail-broad vans") fly away with one of their own chapter as the hawk flies away with a chicken; and the alarmed speaker gravely quoted Thomas Aquinas to support this view of diabolical lability. Nay, the Dollaher might ———. But while the momentous debate of the anxious ecclesiastics was proceeding in one part of the temple, it so happened that the restlessness of the Dollaher caused him to *venture out of the church into one of its courts,*

overshadowed by its carved, quaint, and centennial walls, which rose in venerable grandeur on either hand. Here the verger and some of the acolytes made a sudden dash at him, with the view of securing and disarming him; but that wary refugee was not to be taken unawares. He was ready for battle in a moment. Stripping off his mantle, he whirled it round his left arm by a rapid motion (in which he had attained, from practice, a perfect mastery), so that it presented the protection of an immense and trusty target. Uttering from his mustachioed mouth his wild and ferocious "farrah!" and bounding from the earth as he shouted hoarsely and strongly, he whirled his flickering and whistling *cleave* or blade round his rug head. The church rang with his cry, and echoed it again and again—"Cromaboo! crom-crom-crom-abo!"—through all its solemn galleries and vaults—his cry of defiance, rage, and hate. The novice knight no sooner heard this cry, than quitting the gate, he hastened in the hope of distinguishing his courage in a new encounter; but it was only to witness the precipitous flight of the verger and his associates, who fled from the whirl of the Dollaher's weapon with the headlong hurry of fright—"making," as the knight observed, "a marvellous use of their legs, thereby to atone for too great economy in that of their arms." On seeing the flight of his assailants, the friendless victor sullenly retreated into the interior of the cathedral, where, between the stony columns, skulking into a dark corner, he surlily squatted on the earth like a hog. The young knight, leaving him there, repaired to the altar to continue the vigil of his arms. He had hardly reached the altar steps, when the priests of the church, flocking forth anew from behind the altar, came crowding to him, and with a thousand congratulatory expressions, thanked him heartily and warmly for his noble defence of the integrity of the sanctuary. They then gave him their blessing, lighted an additional lamp to cheer his vigil, bade him a kind farewell, and withdrew.

CHAPTER VI.

"I have nobody now! I have nobody now
To meet me upon the green:
With light locks waving o'er her brow,
And joy in her deep-blue een."—HOGG.

"The muse interprets thus his tender thought."—BEATTIE.

THE novice knight, meantime, in the renewed solitude of the cathedral, had relapsed into his wonted reverie. His mind had taken wing; and forgetting where he was, he bethought him exclusively of the past and the distant. Once love with all its harrowing train invaded his peace—the raging pangs, the maddening jealousy with which it exhausts the soul, stirring up the heart with the courage of a lion, or weighing it down with the heaviest and saddest anxiety—plunging its victim into the roaring storm of war, and again transforming him into a rueful hermit—the strong passion of love, whose irresistible force drove men in those ages into the front of fight, now peopled his vigil with painful and pleasing hallucinations. He saw *her* once more. She beamed on him more effulgent than Cynthia, with those diamond eyes, those looks of sweetness, and that maddening smile. He fancied he saw that graceful neck of dazzling purity, shaded by shining tresses of raven darkness, the brightest of the bright; he saw that skin purer than snow; the music of her words was lingering in his ear—that mixture of harmony and good-nature. The language of the heart breathed from perfumed rosy lips, seeming a kind of spoken generosity—benevolence in words. The brazen clarion of the tournament never thrilled his heart so profoundly as those melodious accents which gave him fierce hardihood in the rough brunt of battle—gave him the martial spirit—gave loudness to his voice and energy to his arm. His heart had burned to be worthy of her, to make her hear of him, to make renown his interpreter in her bower, to extinguish hateful rivalry by valour unmatched. One *morn* he was told she was gone—she was dead. But he

had no faith in death. He could not credit it. It was impossible. 'Twas an imposition. He had not seen that inanimate beauty! No! but he had seen his beloved alive! They lied in their throats who said she had died. She loved him too well, to depart. He was willing to prove that she was still living—with his life—with lance, or sword, or battle-axe, in the braying tourney, in the resounding lists of war, against any false champion of death. What would they have? He would appeal to Heaven; and as a good and truthful soldier, would prove, in ordeal of combat, that his mistress was yet alive. Could there be better evidence? Under the waving limbs of the forest of Fingal, on the misty summits of Ben Eadair, a beautiful form, wrapt along, swift as the breeze, came floating on the wind. The eyes were brighter than the evening star—that pure and lustrous star whose golden splendour leads the sparkling host that swarms over the vaulted sky of night. With immortal charms—with a mild face, beautiful and sad—that form overwhelmed him with its dazzling loveliness, as it passed him in all its supernatural fascination. He shuddered as he saw so near him the light and flower-like figure of that sylph, sweeping upon the liquid air. In his lonely musings, when that enchanting presence passed him, a smile played over those exquisite features, beaming like the sun as she approached; but she ever retired swifter than expression, lighter than air, with a grave and reproachful expression which shadowed her beauty, seeming to say, "You might have rescued me." She was destined to become his muse, his Egeria, his *leannan rìgh*.*

But the tumult of mimic war, the clash of conflict, and the fragor of smashing spears, the shout and uproar of battle, gave relief to his lion-like heart. There she seldom appeared, save to smile. Brassart and cuisses, salet and hauberk, scared away the timid and tyrant people by whom she was enthralled. No, she never died! She was still alive, and he should yet release her. Like him, the good knight Ossian had seen his fascinating huntress, radiant with perpetual beauty; she who beguiled him into

* Familiar spirit.

the glowing paradise of perennial youth, and bound him there two hundred years in the rosy bands of pleasure. Like him, he should follow his beloved, a true knight, and deliver her from captivity. He knew she could not enter that fane. Had she done so, she was safe. The tyrant pigmies who coerced her beauty, the unhallowed people whose captive she had been made, durst not venture with their victim into these awful and venerable precincts. When he looked up to the stellate host of heaven, her beauty met his eye. On the weird hills of the west she transiently gazed in silence on his form. He would yet deliver her. He should show them in the field how terrible he was! and appal them into ransom. Suddenly, amid these thoughts, the clutch of a large hand was laid upon his arm, and turning round, the knight with amazement perceived the Dollaher standing at his elbow.

"What evil deed hast thou done, villain, that this whole city rises and roars for thee?" asked the young lord in a tone of inquiring apprehension, which gave sharpness to his voice. The fugitive affected to sob—

"Little have I done, Sir Knight!"

"Men say you be a great murderer!" observed the knight; "and that is the greatest shame man may have."

"Little have I done—nothing, nothing," sobbed the refugee.

"Nay, blood hath been of a surety shed."

"Oh! true for you, Sir Knight," answered the Dollaher, altering his tone in a most extraordinary manner, and looking round him wildly in apparent apprehension of being overheard; then, suddenly dropping his voice to a whisper, "I'll tell you all," he added. "*They* did it—the *Sighs**—and I must bear the disgrace of their doings. Listen to me. Make thee oath on the cross of thy sword that thou tell no man;" and in expectation of compliance, the Dollaher paused and gazed at him. Excited by curiosity, the knight raised his hilt to his lips. The Dollaher seemed relieved from some painful anxiety. "Listen to me. When they wreak vengeance on those they hate, for they are terribly revengeful, the shame and

* *Sighs*, an elf.

horror are showered on me; I am hunted like a dog; I must bear all. This is truth. By the blessed staff," and he extended his hand, "it is. I would not tell another this. Sir, I am in dread of my life; they beat me, sir, almost a corpse they make me;" and he crawled nearer to him. "This is truth. I'll go through fire and water for it."

"Think'st thou there really be such things?" asked the youth in affected scepticism.

"Is it I?" asked the Dollaher, turning pale from seeming distress of mind, as if appalled by such unpardonable incredulity. "Is it I? Whole miles of mountain have I seen covered with their serried ranks. The wind is their chariot and horses, with which they sweep swifter than the lightning."

"Wherein do they abide?"

"In the grass-grown hills they dwell—in the aged and grass-grown hills. Hadst thou seen them, sir, crowding out of their knolls, as I have done, numberless as swarms of bees—had they taken and bound thee, Sir Knight, as they bound me once, thou wouldst no longer be incredulous. Sir Knight, observe this cicatrix on my breast. 'Twas they that branded me thus. Sir Knight, I am their *Mog*.* But near thee I am safe."

"Do Christians live among them?" asked the knight.

"Queens have I seen in their train!" replied the Dollaher. "All their prisoners do I know. I knew a man, my lord, my own twenty-first cousin by the mother's side, and one day, coming out of his lord's drinking house, he saw an elf, blue as the sky, standing on the summit of a hillock. Well, it sliddered down the face of the hillock, like the wind, and stood at the door, and beckoned, and called him to come in. My cousin, my lord, rushed into the hillock, which opened and closed on him for ever. He is in the hill, and, more than that, he is among them."

"Knowest thou," asked the inquisitive esquire, "knowest thou my Marian?"

The Dollaher coughed. "Well, I know her. On a palfrey have I seen her caracoling. It was not a true palfrey; it was only a weed, *prasha*;† but it had all the appearance of a palfrey."

* Slave.

† *Prashāc*, kail.

"How looked the lady?" asked the youth gravely.

"Sad!" replied the Dollaher.

"Sad, didst say?" and he shifted his position, as if in pain.

"Oh! most sad, as if, my lord, she were mourning the absent and beloved."

"Could she be redeemed, thinkest thou?"

"None but thyself could do it; and I could show thee the way were I free!" added the Dollaher, with indescribable eagerness—"free once more upon the wooded slopes of Tawney; free once more in Borna Breena.

CHAPTER VII.

"'Tis merry—'tis merry in fairy land,
When fairy birds are singing,
When the court doth ride by their monarch's side,
With bit and bridle ringing."—SCOTT.

"We shall teach you the magic *rann*,* and you shall enter the hills," continued the Dollaher, sideling over towards him like a serpent, "and bind those that be in them. I don't know it myself"—and here he dropped his voice to a whisper, and keenly perused the face of his companion, while his lips were strangely prominent—"but I know one that does, a wise woman that has all the *ranns*. She knows the *donnpuirdear*,† and the *beulneordear*,‡ and everything. When you repeat the *rann*—ub-bub-bub-boo—the trembling hills shall gape, and you, like a prince, shall walk into their vacant caverns; the golden apples are there, Sir Knight—in the *bpuirgen*,§ I mean; 'tis there the sword of light is shining, lighting those marble halls. There are pens there that write of themselves, and finely-jewelled harps, that play of themselves. The helmet of Oscar is in the *bpuirgean*, and the great horse of Cuchullin. Many a time, a *puirge*, in the silent nights, when I laid my ear to the grass, I heard him, deep in the hill, grimly neigh, and

* Rune, rhyme.

† Divination by birds.

‡ Incantation.

§ Cavern.

he rattling his iron chain on the hollow manger, and snorting to be free. Cuchullin himself is there, stretched in his harness, taking his enchanted rest, waiting the awakening bugle of some great Cuḡat.* They say, Sir Knight; that in old times the hills used to open in the dark nights of *Sawin*, and out used to prance that great horse, Sir Knight, and graze along the plain; and they say, sir, that people used to come travelling in twos and in threes from the five *Koogs* of Eire to get knowledge from the same horse; and it's he used to speak like a man, Sir Knight, and tell people all that would ever happen to them, Sir Knight, and answer all questions, Sir Knight; and the people used to leave their offerings on the rath, gold, and silver, and precious gifts; and, Sir Knight, they say Saint Patrick once crossed the hill, and it shut like marble, and the great horse never came out more. But you'll see him, Sir Knight, and he'll talk to you in the hollow hill, and he'll tell you all that will ever happen—*dar Criosd*, he will. She herself is there, Sir Knight, with her starry eyes swimming in tears like the autumn sun in a misty cloud; for her gentle heart is gnawed by unutterable grief, and her darling face pale as the moon of winter, when the hurrying clouds are drifting across its wild and silvery light." Here the Dollaher put his hand to his eyes, and affected to weep. He secretly thought, "How I would talk to him if I had a mouthful of whisky!" "She shall come to thee, she shall speak to thee, she shall smile upon thee, she shall be thine. This were easily done were I but free—free from this grim city of grisly heads, ugh! where craft, and cruelty, and cowardice are laired together." "A minute, and thou saidst thou wert safe within these walls; now would'st thou fain away."

"I am no bookman, Sir Knight, but an axeman. I say what's in my galled heart—my heart of fire and passion. They will hang me, Sir Knight;" and so saying, he sprawled on the floor, and hugged and kissed the feet of the youth, and howled out a torrent of lugubrious wailing, "oḡ oḡ, oḡ oḡ."

"By the grace of God, I shall deliver thee clean," said his companion,

* A knight.

"Now, Sir Knight—*now*, while the streets be clear," shrieked the Dollaher, full of eagerness, animated by a wolfish life.

"Come forth—out shalt thou go; but where shall I see thee again?"

"Near Borna Breena, on Thursday night, the solemn night of the great *toimh*,* at the hill of many sepulchres; when the bell has sounded matin song, I shall stand before thee, *dar Criosd*."

The youth suddenly paused, as if a thought struck him.

"What manner of knight be Cuchullin?" he asked.

"By the holy rood, he be in my advice as strong a knight as any now living," answered the Dollaher, wondering at what his companion was driving.

"Will he joust?"

"Is it Cuchullin? As sure as thou art man, he shall rise, and mount his great horse, and dress his shield, and joust with thee, and thou like it, in the hill."

"Wist ye"—asked the youth, his martial ardour kindling as he spoke—"wist ye what he bears?"

Bowing his head, the Dollaher murmured some unintelligible mumblement. "What cognizance beareth he?" repeated the youth. In those days the cognizance or crest was the man.

"I cannot describe his arms well," answered the criminal; "for it is, you see, no part of my charge." The Dollaher was no herald.

"I would I knew his cognizance," repeated the knight.

"To what intent?" asked the Dollaher, fixing his eyes upon him as if he would fain see through him.

"For I would wit," was the rejoinder, meaning he wished to know.

"Thou shalt not wit at this time," answered the Dollaher; "but on Thursday night, ere thou enter the postern of the hill, I shall make thee to wit."

"I would fain know what thing that enchanted champion beareth in his shield, or I go to prove adventures in the wizard hill; for as I ride in, I shall cry aloud, 'Knight with the black shield (or whatever it be), come forth, and

* *toimh*, vulgarly called Thor, thunder,

make thee ready unto me!' and, with a great eager heart, I shall give him a great dash with my spear, and I shall smite him over his horse's tail; and when he is unhorsed, I shall cry aloud, that all the hill shall echo, 'Yield thee, Sir Cuchullin!' then, and he yield not, I shall get out my sword, and rush to him, and give him three great strokes upon the helm, that the fire shall flash out. I shall drag him forth of the hill, and bring him with me, or else I shall die thereof."

"But, see and thou take no wight with thee," exclaimed the Dollaher, with an air of great caution, and perusing his face, "nor page, nor squire; for, see, there be mortal danger to thee, and thou go not alone. Any knight that goeth attended, shall surely die."

"Alone shall I go."

"Thou shouldst arm and horse thee in the best manner thou canst, lest he give thee a fall, and make prize of thee. Right so, as he hath done other knights aforetime, and throw thee into his strong prison, which be no other than the deep caverns of the hollow hill." The young man made a gesture of impatience.

"How shall I know the cavern?" asked the knight.

"When you ride into the ravine of Borna Breena, you'll see a great byle buaṛa towering on your left."

"What is a byle buaṛa?"

"What is a byle buaṛa?" shrieked the Dollaher. "It is a magic tree—a tree sacred to the *Sighs*; that mystic tree rises before the cavern. I'll be at the entrance to help you with a black cat under my right arm and a red cock—a real march bird—under my left."

"To what end?"

"If *they* be too strong for you, I'll pitch the black cat at them. There's nothing alarms the *Sighs* so much as a black cat, except a red cock. They'll tremble, and quake, and disappear at sight of them."

"But have you been at any time in those caverns?"

"Have I? Is it me? To be sure I have. I know the name of every *Sigh* in them."

"Is there light in the cavern?"

"The cavern is lighted by the gleaming of a sword."

"*The hilt of the sword?*"

"No; the blade of the sword. It blazes like the noon-day sun. This cloyceamh soluis—the sword of light—is held by an enchanted man who stands like a statue in the centre of the cave."

"I shall undertake this adventure."

"By my hand, my lord, I shall not fail thee. And thou overcome Cuchullin, Sir Knight, thou shalt have the great treasure that be in the hill. Nor is this all. Thou shalt have the Sharwan Loclannach for a *mogh* or slave."

"Who is the Sharwan Loclannach?" asked the knight.

"Who is he? is it? Oh!" said the Dollaher, lowering his voice, "he is an awful *Sigh*. I saw him once with my own eyes. His skin is as yellow as saffron. His eyes are as red as fire; his teeth are as big as a wild boar's tusks, and his horrible bones are as heavy as iron. He has a long snout, and a swarthy, forbidding, morose face."

"Is he armed?" asked the youth.

"He is then," said the Dollaher; "an iron club trails after him, which is fastened by a chain to a heavy ring of iron encircling his yellow body. He is slumbering heavily inside the cavern. The moment you enter, up he starts with a roar like thunder. You'll have much ado to get him down; but when you have him under you, hit him three times on the hairy head with his own iron club, and he is your slave for life. Then you will encounter Cuchullin."

"I require thee, let me prove this adventure."

"You shall prove it, my lord."

The Dollaher had the faculty of assuming the character of those he spoke to. But this was not for long. He became himself again. Ere he took his leave,—“Between ourselves,” whispered the Dollaher, in the subdued manner of sincere and friendly gratitude, “if ever you want a weeny job done, I know a man—” and here he winked hard and made a thrust, his eye flashing like those of a serpent—“you understand? By the man that made me!” he slowly continued, “’twould kill a horse; and when all is over, look at this, *Dar Criosd*, you would not see a sign! not a sign! barring one drop, the size of a midge, on the middle of the forehead. You don’t believe me? By the Garland of Howth! he’s the handiest

man with a tool—a little spike he has in his stick, no bigger than a quill—the neatest *skiver* you ever saw; the handiest in the troop; and when you want him, you have only to whistle this way—,” and the speaker uttered a subdued whistle. “The lord justiciary would swear that lightning did it. Not a drop of blood worth mentioning, nor a puncture you’d put a needle in.”

Here, again, the Dollaher made a thrust at vacancy. “Do you understand?” asked the hoarse and hardened villain, with a blank stare of inquiry. And taking it for granted he did, for several minutes the Dollaher dwelt with delighted earnestness, amounting almost to ecstasy, on the smallness and fineness of the weapon, and the deadly dexterity of the assassin. He was almost eloquent on this subject. His hearer was one of those men who escape vice from an unconsciousness, a divine incapacity to comprehend it. He was no stoic—he did not seek to escape evil; but the nobleness and purity of his nature rendered the virus innocuous. That instinct which recognizes vice at first sight, and takes to it as web-footed fowls to the water, was absent in him.

CHAPTER VIII.

“All Syracuse starts up upon her hills,
And lifts her hundred thousand hands, and shouts!
Hark how she shouts! . . . shout again!
Again! until the mountains echo thee,
And the great sea joins in that mighty voice.”—BANIM.

THE devil is a deeply interesting personage. A curious work might be written on what the devil has done for literature and the drama. As, during the Crimean war, nothing interested the allies so much as their formidable enemy, the Russians, so nothing interests the majority of mankind more than the great enemy of man. Satan excites deep interest; and all the great poets have availed themselves of the circumstance. Hence, we have the terrible descriptions of the immortal Dante. His

“*Citta dolente di eterno dolore,*”

Hence, too, we have the descriptions by Tasso of—

“Tartarei numi di seder piu degni là sovra il sole,” &c.

Hence, we have the archangel ruined of the eyeless Milton—

“High on a throne of royal state, which far
Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind,
Satan exalted sat.”

All the great poets have made use of the devil; and, as we are not to suppose that the utility is all on one side, it is just possible that the devil, in his turn, makes some use of the great poets. There may be here a principle of reciprocity—a give-and-take principle—which the eminent reviewers and historians of literature have overlooked. It seems certain that literary men love to introduce the devil into their writings; and he, no doubt, returns the favour, and does the honours of his abode to his intellectual friends, he himself being a pure intellect. Be this as it may, the devil, say what they will against him, is intensely interesting. Nor is it himself alone: all his accredited agents participate in the interest which invests their master. The witches of Macbeth, and the “demon elves” of Scott, are interesting on this account. Like them, the Dollaher was indebted, for the interest and horror he awaked, to his supposed connection with Lucifer.

The European nations have derived from commerce the luxuries of Asia. They have grown rich and sumptuous. But unhappy Europe, shining in Asiatic silks, and glittering in foreign gold, has been covered with vast armies and prodigious monarchies, like those of Asia. In an evil hour she has become altogether Asiatic—an opulent slave. When she was poor, hardy, and warlike, she was comparatively happy; for she had no prodigious empires, no great standing armies; she was studded with free towns, full of animation, and roaring with life; she was dotted with dukedoms nearly as free; but her liberty has vanished, and henceforth municipal liberty and local independence in Europe are impossible.

Among the old free towns of Europe, mediæval Dublin was not the least free. The Liffey, a gentle river with a *monarch's name*, originating in the mountains adjacent to

Leinster, meanders far and wide through the renowned and martial "province of the spear," ere it glides softly by the strong ramparts of the "city of the swords,"* which, girdled with thick-ribbed and massive bulwarks, and deep inclosing fosses, and studded with turrets, steeples, and grim towers, spreads over a gentle hill rising beside the Liffey.

A little below Dublin the Liffey foams, brawls, and roars over a prodigious rock, which slants across the stream, and weirs its current, and is known far and near by the name of "stand-fast-dick." In the immediate vicinity of this massive rock a group of idlers was one day gossiping—indeed, all Dublin was babbling about the escape of the Dollaher.

"Did you hear the news of the holy image?"

"No."

"They say that a miraculous holy image, that was in the Church of the Holy Trinity since the time of Strongbow, was found on the banks of the Cammoge, a mile from the walls."

"That's very strange. How did it happen?"

"The holy image moved out o' the church when the Dollaher entered it."

"Does not that show what he is?"

"Does it not?"

"And they say, too, that the cross flew from the grand altar, and was found in the heart of Cullen's wood?"

"Who found it?"

"A Glassamucky man, returning to the mountains after selling a horseload of cowhides."

"They'll never remain in the city again, I'm thinking."

"The city, and, above all, the church, that harbours such a miscreant, is not worthy of the holy images of the saints."

"That's my own belief, too."

"Ay, and mine."

"Ay, and mine."

"Dublin can expect nor luck, nor grace, while so unclean a bird finds a nest in its walls."

* Dublin.

"True for you."

"It's very true."

"We ought to have torn him limb from limb," cried one, outvoicing his neighbours.

"We should, by the immortal god of war, we should," cried another.

"Yes, we should; now he's prowling about like an evil spirit, bad as ever," cried a third.

"I'd have no more mercy on him—the spider of hell!—than a mad dog," resumed the first speaker.

"Ah!" said the second, "if I had a spike in my hands, and no one between us, I'd punish his ribs for the deeds of his villany."

"Patience, patience," interposed a graybeard. "The justiciary is a good man, and hates the Irish. We'll see his head bound to the Barbican, and grinning on the bulwarks, and his carcase rolling down the Poddle yet."

"It would be no sin to kill him," shouted another; "for the villain has been excommunicated, bell, book, and candle-light."

"I never heard that before. Where was he excommunicated?" eagerly queried a bystander.

"At Navan, on market day, this time three years. At the market cross the bishop excommunicated him, pronouncing openly against him the psalm *Deus laudem*."

"He did?"

"So sure as you are there, he did; decreeing and adjudging that in any town unto which the said villain should ever after enter, no baptism or burial should be had, or mass said or sung, within three days after his residence there."

"Why? On what account?"

"They say that he went to the Abbey of Navan. He went to the Abbey of Navan," repeated the speaker, raising his voice to secure or attract attention—"to the Abbey of Navan, where Master John Stackpool was in sanctuary; and what did he do—himself, and some holy lambs of the same kidney?—he took Master John out of the church of our Blessed Lady there, carrying him thence to Wilkinston, holding him in prison there. It is well known to the whole world, and the wood of Allen, that the villains cut out

Master John's tongue, and, in their own estimation and intention, put out his eyes. Though, when he was brought back, and cast there before our Blessed Lady, by her grace, mediation, and miraculous power, he was restored to his sight and tongue."

"He was?" The crowd crossed their foreheads and struck their breasts.

"They say," said a meagre fellow, with a yellow scab under his brown moustache, his hair standing on end as with awe, "they say—the Lord bless us!—that he was changed into a wolf, and went howling in the forest forty days and forty nights, by the strength and virtue of the excommunication;" and the meagre fellow gaped about him, his eyes expanding with alarm. This communication appalled the bystanders,—they were silent for several minutes, as if ruminating on the statement. To explain this, we must remark, that the horrible superstition of Lycanthropy was prevalent in that age. According to this superstition, men occasionally assumed, not only the rough fur, horrible teeth, and cruel appetites of wolves, they cohabited with wolves—propagand wolves—and for a time were, to all intents and purposes, completely wolfish.

"He is no better than a wolf," said one of the former speakers, slowly resuming his voice, and making an effort to dissemble his dread.

"Sure he's not," said a second, with a little more animation.

"What better is he?" cried a third, strangely intending this query for an affirmative.

"He deserves the death of a wolf," cried the first speaker, with more appearance of courage, and coughing loudly, as if to cough away his secret terror.

"He does, he does."

"They say," observed another, hushing his voice almost to a whisper, his hearers gazing on him with eager eyes, and inclining their ears and holding their breath as he spoke, "that he then joined M'Comas's band, and fought against O'Brien, at Limerick."

"Dublin," observed another, shaking his head, "was never the same since M'Comas pitched his camp at the foot of the hills. I wish the devil had him and his."

"Now you said it," was the triumphant reply. "But they say that M'Comas knows nothing about him," resumed the other. "There is no such man in the troop."

"M'Comas may say what he likes; but the Dollaher—I know it from a cousin of mine—is constable of gallows-glasses to M'Comas."

"A more murdering gang never approached the walls."

"I would well," was the reply, "he were still skulking in Oxmantown, or where he would, save in our good town."

"Would he were," exclaimed a pale listener, hitherto silent; "but Oxmantown was growing far too hot for the churl. The Fingallians were aghast at his black doings. Men say he was sustained seven years on the children of the commons * of that land. At last they rose and hunted the felon out of their country, and now he has taken his abode in Dublin, and no man's life is safe."

"By the Kilcah † of Kells, the church that gave him refuge ought to be pulled down," cried an exasperated citizen, a mason by trade, with every appearance of sincere conviction; "and was it not a shame for the knight to brandish lance in such bad quarrel?"

"Nay, nay," exclaimed a youth, in a cap like that of the knave of diamonds in a pack of cards, "sacrilege is a black and heavy deed at any time. Better baulk the people in their will, than let them peril their own souls. The knight was i' the right."

"He was, was he?" cried a butcher with a greasy apron, fingering his big knife, which hung before him in a wooden sheath. "Oh! you cry his cry, mayhap."

"No, I do not; an' I did, 'twere no shame."

"I should not wonder," resumed the mason, outvoicing his neighbours, "if the floor of the cathedral opened and swallowed him alive. Certainly, the blessed relic will quit the church and the city. Better have all the O'Byrne's, bad as they are, swaggering and strutting in the streets, than *that* one man—an' he be a man."

"I am told," exclaimed a lame crone, with a great air of

* *Plebeiana*.

† *Cuileac*, a leaf; a relic of St. Brendan.

fear, "that he sometimes appears as a woman, other times as a four-footed brute; but his favourite appearance is that of a pig." But as this was to her present auditors stale news, one of them exclaimed, "I wonder where he can be at present."

"Let him be where he may, he has certainly escaped out of the church. Folk say the clergy know where he is, or have had some hand in getting rid of him. The treasurer might probably tell a story, if he would speak."

"Oh, nonsense!" exclaimed another, "the reverend canons were frightened out of their wits, I'm told. They quaked for fear, when they found the villain had taken refuge among them. They may have let him out; but they took no trouble to cage such a harpy."

"By St. Nicholas! an' he have gone to burrow in the vaults, he will never come up again!"

"Then I heartily hope he has," said another.

"They are dreadful vaults, by all accounts. I heard my grandfather say, that in his days a fletcher went three miles under ground in those vaults. He was so frightened that he died speechless the third day after he got out."

"I hope the Dollaher is down in them."

CHAPTER IX.

"I've wander'd by the rolling Lee,
And Lene's green bowers;
I've seen the Shannon's wide-spread sea,
And Limerick's towers;
And Liffey's tide, where halls of pride
Frown'd o'er the flood below!"—EDWARD WALSH.

THE cathedral was glowing with the splendour and majesty of religion—a hundred boyish ministrants, in snow-white weeds, knelt or moved around the altar, on which innumerable lights were glowing through the incense, like stars of the largest magnitude. The harmonious thunder of a gigantic organ was pealing through the edifice, and a choir of sweet *young voices*, responsive to its grand and trumpet-like

breathings, rose heavenwards with pleading tones. In their sumptuous garb of gold and crimson, the long-robed sacrificers were chanting the invocation of the mystic Spirit—*veni Creator*—when a group of knights, in polished armour, were seen advancing in the central aisle. The group consisted of two ancient and grave knights, having between them a young and comely stripling, who bore a lighted taper in his hand. At that intrusion, the Earl of Kildare, his Irish *crommeal* * curling on his lips, and his fine eye flashing with what appeared to be indignation, raised his stately form, draped in purple cloth of gold, and asked seriously and solemnly—"Sir Knights, why and wherefore approach ye this altar?"

The deepest silence fell upon the knightly congregation, —the Carmelites in brown robes, and Dominicans in black and white, and the watching multitudes of citizens all in breathless expectation of the response, the solemn pomp of religion seeming as it were to pause. The reply was—

"We come to demand for the most potent, noble, and honourable Christopher St. Lawrence, son of Sir Nicholas St. Lawrence, Baron of Howth, admission into the most puissant, most noble, and most venerable order of knight-hood."

A long pause followed, which was finally broken by the Earl, who asked, "What are his credentials, and who are his sponsors?"

"We are his sponsors," gravely replied the ancient knight: "I, Sir Hugh of Tawney, and this, my comrade, Sir Jaques, Baron of Delvin, good knights and true."

"What do you promise for him?" asked the earl.

"That he shall be faithful to God and our Lady, and defend holy Church to the uttermost of his power. That he shall uphold and maintain the noble state of chivalry with horse, armour, and other knightly habiliments, and succour all those of the order, if they have need. That he shall do diligence, wherever he hears there be masterful robbers and murderers who oppress poor people, and bring them to the law at his power. That he shall defend the quarrel of all ladies of honour. That he shall aid the weak,

* Moustache.

and make opposition to the strong, and shelter the homeless. 'That he shall never flee in time of affray and battle.'

Then the youth spoke: "By my own hand, and by God himself, I oblige myself all these promises to observe, keep, and fulfil," said the youth.

"Give me the spurs and sword," said the earl to his chamberlain. This officer immediately presented him with a pair of gold spurs, and a rich sword in a brilliant scabbard.

"Place this spur on his right foot," said the earl to a nobleman near him. The latter took the spur, and knelt down before young Howth, raised the latter's foot and placed it on his own knee. He then strapped the spur to his heel, and, in addition, kissed his knee, and made the sign of the cross on it.

"Place this spur on his left foot," said the earl, presenting the left spur to another nobleman. The latter performed the same ceremony,—knelt down, took the left foot and strapped the left spur to it. Finally, the earl seized the sword, and, in the meekness of his nature, girt it round the youth's waist, and thus ended that part of ceremony.

While this ceremony was going on, a great commotion or disturbance took place amongst the congregation. This was occasioned by the appearance of a massive black war-horse, whose head, adorned with plumes, might be seen above the multitude near the great entrance. Led by a page, he came prancing, and snorting, and rearing, and driving the people to the right and left. His name was Eachdana; and the words of the poet—for he had been already celebrated by poets—were perfectly applicable to him:—

*"Eachdana is a dainty steed,
Strong, black, and of a noble breed.
Fine his nose, his nostrils thin,
But blown abroad by pride within.
His mane is like a river flowing,
And his eyes like embers glowing
In the darkness of the night,
And his pace as swift as light.
Look how, round his straining throat,
Grace and shifting beauty float," &c.*

His face was adorned with a polished chanfron, as bright as mirror. A gorgeous poitral spread over his ample chest; while his magnificent saddle-cloth, embroidered

with roses in each corner, almost swept the flags of the aisle. He belonged to that noble Spanish race for which—in common with her hawks and her hounds—Ireland was famous in the Middle Ages. More than once, as she advanced up the aisle, he reared to a height which rendered him quite perpendicular, and then came down heavily on the flags with a fragor that resounded through the whole church. A rich manefaire glittered on his glossy neck, and his embroidered bridle resembled a wreath of variegated flowers. He was, in short, a horse fit for a monarch. While the impatient war-horse—neighing aloud and tossing his plumed head—was held in by an armed knight, all steel, before the high altar, the archbishop of Dublin, with tottering limb, ascended the steps, and feebly turning to the young lord, addressed him as follows:—"He who seeks to be a knight should have great qualities. He must be high in courage, strong in danger, liberal of gifts, and secret in council; patient in difficulties, powerful against enemies, prudent in his deeds. He must undertake no war without just cause, give aid to widows and orphans, favour no injustice, and spare neither his life nor blood in defence of holy Church. For the Church in all ages is, and has been," continued the old prelate, "the mother and friend of the warrior. She who crossed the sincere paladins, and gave her blessing to Louis IX. and the good Godfrey! their venerable mother reckoned of old amongst her favourite and most cherished children, the 'thundering legion' and the Knights of the Hospital, who furnished to heaven a crowd of glorious martyrs and confessors. Did she not ever send her cowed friars, with crucifix in hand, to the bloody verge of perilous battle, to confess the dying and to bless the dead?—but never to insult the fallen and gasping warrior, whose obedience and intrepidity our sympathizing mother has a thousand times commiserated, soothed, and blessed. On ten thousand fields of battle her kneeling cenobites have lifted the fallen swordsman's dying head, unlaced his choking gorget, moistened his ghastly lips, and drunk his fluttering accents, while opening the gates of heaven to his heroic soul. The true warrior was a living martyr; and the Church who sounded the trumpet of the *Crusades* was authorized by the examples of Divine Scrip-

ture, as in Luke iii. When John the Baptist was interrogated by certain men-at-arms as to what should be done by warriors for their eternal salvation, the apostle did not tell them—as *Manes*, the heresiarch, would have done—to forsake their banner. He told them to be satisfied with their pay, and, as St. Augustine said, ‘*Quibus proprium stipendium sufficere debere precepit militare non prohibuit*,’ &c.”

In conclusion, the prelate animadverted to the nothingness of fame. “Find me now that statue of massy gold,” he exclaimed, “which Gorgias, the Leontin, placed in Delphos to eternize his name, or that of Gabrion in Rome, or that of Perseus with the golden tongue in Athens, or innumerable others erected by great captains in brass or hardest marble. Certainly many years since they are perished, and now there are few who know that Metellus triumphed over King Jugurtha, Aquilius over King Aris-tonicus, or Aurelius over Zenobia, the Queen of the Palmyrians. All fame shall die, all memory be forgotten. No more shall Aristotle be cited in the schools, nor Ulpian alleged in the tribunals. No more shall Plato be read among the learned, nor Cicero meditated by the orators. No more shall Seneca be admired by the understanding, nor Alexander extolled among warriors,” &c.

Amid the blare of a hundred clarions, and the music of a hundred harps, a minstrel, arrayed in the green and auburn weeds of his caste, a four-cornered purple mantle thrown carelessly over his shoulders, was seen climbing the steps of the altar. When he had reached the platform, he leaned for a moment on his instrument, which was nearly as tall as himself (a fine-stringed harp, richly ornamented with jewels), and seemed absorbed in silent thought; then, turning round, he confronted the knightly congregation, and touching the melodious strings of his eloquent clárréac, he began in a fine voice, amid deep silence, a solemn recitative on the duties of a knight. “A pretext of battle is never sought by the knight who is worthy of the great 3p4v 34rr3e,”* said the bard. “The only object of chivalric war should be the support of justice, honour, and virtue. But, however loath and

* Chivalry.

sluggish to enter on unnecessary war, the knight will fly to arms when the safety of his friends, his clansmen, or his honour calls him to the field. The maintenance of literary men was the solemn duty of knighthood. No wise prince ever neglected the bard. The glory of the hero is wafted down the stream of time by the voice of the poet; while the tyrant, the coward, and the traitor are blackened with disgrace, and damned to eternal infamy. The protection of the people was the duty of the knight. He should maintain the rights, conserve the privileges, and guard the tranquillity of the people. Should the peace of that people be interrupted by the progeny of injustice, should the ferocious warriors of foreign tribes—loud, black, and unrelenting—lay waste the fields, and bear in their bony arms our white-bosomed beauties to their piratical ships, then the shield of the knight should be thrown over the people, as, when the midnight storm rages and whistles over the lone and lofty cliffs of Ben Eader, the pinions of the mountain eagle are spread tremblingly over its eyrie, to shield its tender eaglets from the maddening fury of the maniacal storm. The lance of the knight must glitter in the front of his people. The blood of the ravagers, who waste the fields where his clansmen repose, must crimson the sword of the hero, and their hostile homesteads be mantled in the blaze of conflagration, lest, when their vigour be restored, their outrages be repeated. Such a war delights his heart, and the oppressors of the people are swept away by his rage. But when battle no longer rages, and the humbled enemy sues for mercy, compassion seizes the heart of the mighty, the point of the death-giving spear falls harmless to the ground, and the children of the prostrate rejoice in the clemency of the conqueror." Finally, the young warrior knelt down, and, shining in polished plate, received the accolade from the hands of Kildare; then rising, he put his foot into his stirrup, and vaulted lightly into his war-saddle, helmed, plumed, and sheathed in shining plate, all over bright as silver. The young knight controlled his fierce, powerful, and chafing *destrier* * with admirable horsemanship, while a murmur of

* Charger.

admiration burst from the crowd. The murmur of the spectators caused him to glance over the congregation. Several native *Flahies* or princes were present at this ceremony. Their appearance was truly aristocratic; they "disdained the shadow that they trod on at noon." Superiority of the animal man is an essential element of aristocracy; and these wild, bold, and majestic *Flahies* were all endowed with that animal superiority. They were powerful in frame, keen of eye, and tall of stature. Among these, the appearance of O'Farrell, whom he recognized by his *braccawn*,* struck him as most majestic. Whenever O'Farrell, or indeed any of these proud nobles, visited the pale, his followers, to the number of fifty or a hundred gentlemen, many of them of large landed property, came with him to do him honour; and as these gentlemen were surrounded by their own officers, O'Farrell appeared like a sovereign with his parliament and army. Each of O'Farrell's sub-chiefs was attended by a "battel" or half a "battel" of gallowglasses,† or a company of kerns—i. e., forty stately fellows in their *braccans* or *tights*, and short pelisses or *Ionars*, a garment that extended from the neck to the knee, and each armed with a strong and handsome target, rimmed with brass, encompassed with crimson circles, and adorned with a central boss, having a sharp-pointed steel, about half an ell in length, screwed into the navel of it. A sturdy *cleave sullish*, or shining falchion, hung at his left, while a *skian* or stiletto was inserted in the thigh of the trows.

To return to young Lord Howth. Having glanced at the native chiefs and their clansmen, the young knight wheeled his charger and rode out of the church, amid the blessing of the spectators, who streamed out into the streets, and cheered him with hearty shouts.

* Plaid.

† Axeman.

CHAPTER X

"Forth from under the altar smoke
Issued a dreadful fiend."—SPENSER.

As the knight was wheeling his charger, preparatory to riding out of the church, something caught his eye and paled his face. It might be an illusion; but he thought he saw the rug head and glistening eye of the Dollaher pop up beside the haughty figure of O'Farrell, gape at him for a moment with secret scorn of his vainglory, then duck down and melt away among the multitude. The young horseman, stung by the expression of the face, felt tempted to utter his war-cry and charge home into the clans, and hunt into the streets that grim satyr-faced baboon; but he restrained himself and dismissed the idea. It was in vain that he drove a piercing glance repeatedly through the natives; he could see nothing like that dangerous savage. Suddenly a suspicion flashed through the mind of the young knight, and lent lightnings to his eye. He suspected that the O'Farrell, calm and dignified as he seemed, was leagued in some mysterious way with that crawling Dollaher, and plotting the destruction of the Anglo-Irish—at least, that some scheme to baffle himself, some treacherous device, was hatching amongst those subdolous people. Thus, for some moments, his soul was seized and worked by the demon of hate, till he bethought him with malignant satisfaction that there were deep and dismal dungeons under the tower of Howth Castle, where many a native, locked in iron shackles, wept himself blind. And those who mocked himself would do well to look out, lest they too should drain away their days in darkness—whiten into hoary age—or bleach, a horrible and lifeless skull, on the battlements of Ben Eadair. As the wild fiend of anger developed its energy in his heart in this hideous form of thought, his face grew livid and his eye lambent, but still he could not see the Dollaher.

Meantime, the knightly congregation and the plaided

chiefs, formed into splendid cortège, came sweeping along through the city in baronial magnificence, with blazoned tabards, trumpets sounding, banners flying, and proud and stately *destriers*, champing the bit, and moving with easy paces. In the fashionable parlance of the time, they consisted of *chevaux al armes*, *hoblours et gentz a pie*. The pomp and parade of feudal power came swelling along the street, devices without number, and liveries of every hue. While lordly knights, courteous damosels, and noble chevaliers were thus cavalcading in gentle and solemn guise to the lists in Hoggen Green, there appeared in the crowd a big bareheaded man, whose restless vagaries disturbed the armed procession. He was attired in a yellow surplice or tunic, which wanted the ordinary extravagance of sleeve, but was vicariously decorated with epaulets puffed out in open needle-work, slashing, and rich silk. He was armed with a heavy bludgeon, knotted and gnarled, and shod with an iron spike which, including shaft and all, was five feet in length. This he flourished round his head, making it whistle as if it were a willow wand, while with flashing eye and ungovernable energy he shouted in his vernacular, "Pharro! for Galway! Pharro! for the Claddagh! Pharro! for the old heap of stones!" This ferocious champion of Galway was with no small difficulty, and after a savage struggle, removed, roaring, by a body of archers, beyond the precincts of the tents and pavilions, where the archers let him loose.

CHAPTER XI.

"Periculosæ plenum opus aleæ tractas."—HORACE.

EVERY one conversant with Irish antiquities must be aware that, according to English authorities, the native Irish selected a hill side for their council chamber. Their parliaments assembled, and their kings were inaugurated, on the gentle slope of some beautiful *tuácl*.* As Davis

* Mound, or folks-mote.

says of his "True Irish King"—

"Round, round was the rath on a far-seeing hill,
Like his blemishless honour and vigilant will."

"There is a great use among the Irish," says Spenser, "to make great assemblies together on a rath or hill, there to parley about matters and wrongs."

To a hill of this kind—a council hill—situated at some little distance from Dublin—the Galway man whom we introduced in our last chapter repaired so soon as he was free from the grasp of the archers. Here a group of Irishmen were assembled, whose appearance, age, costume, bearing, and faces were strangely contrasted. The principal person present was the head Brehon, or chief judge of the tribe of O'Farrell, attired in a *salain* or mantle, which hooded his head, draped his person, and covered him nearly from top to toe. With the green and grassy turf under his feet, sprinkled with primroses or spangled with "wee modest" daisies—the fresh and salubrious zephyr fanning his withered cheek—the blue sky in serene beauty smiling over his head, and the lark soaring and warbling in the air—

"Like a high-born maiden in a palace tower,
Soothing her love-laden soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower"—

the Brehon or judge sat and listened, rebuked, admonished, or praised the group around him.

"Well! where have you been ever since?" said he, addressing the Galway man.

"Through the whole of Clanrickard's country, then; I trudged over every acre of it. It's the great country."

"How many have you sworn in?" asked the Brehon.

"I suffered terribly in that country," replied the Galway man.

"Pester me not with thy cackle, man!" exclaimed the Brehon, in an angry and imperative voice, "Let me know how many men thou'st engaged?"

"Fifty men, then," said the Galway man, reluctant to give a direct answer, "fifty men harnessed in mail and *basnets*, having every one of them his weapon called a

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sparre. And it's what I can tell you; better men than them fifty never came into the *Dual's** country, or any other country. I would not put them—."

"Silence, sir," exclaimed the Brehon, "and answer me; have you made only fifty?"

"I have then," said the Galway man triumphantly, "fifty more is coming, kerns or naked † men dressed in trews, jackets, and linen tunics, so swift and nimble of foot that, like unto stags, they run over mountains and valleys like Sighs.‡ Those have darts and short bows, which sort of people be both hardy and clever to search woods and morasses, in the which, I be bound, they be hard to be beaten; I paid three half-pence for every meal they ate on their way, and still have some money," and the speaker, with an air of self-gratulation, struck a purse attached to his girdle.

"Stand aside. Well, O'Donoghue," said the Brehon, addressing another member of the group—a large man, plaided, shirted, comely, and bearded, "have you succeeded?"

"Five-and-twenty days I sat on a cow skin, in the town of Cashel, hoping to entice all such persons to resort to me as would be disposed to take arms and join us in our quarrel."

The Brehon made a gesture of impatience. "Well, well! what have you done?"

"I have secured five-and-thirty gallowglasses, well armed," replied O'Donoghue, "with shirts of mail, skulls, § and skians;|| they be gentlemen of tall stature, whose weapon is a kind of pole-axe; the stroke of their halberd is deadly where it lighteth, they being men picked and selected for their great and mighty bodies. Reckoning to every gallowglass a man for his harness-bearer, and a boy to carry his provisions, he, as you all know, is a *sparre* of his weapon. I have sworn in twenty-five of them; we drank blood together!"

During this conversation the mantle of the Brehon fell partially from his shoulders, and revealed his face, head, and form. He was about five feet seven in height, with a

* *Dual*, a foreigner: i.e., Dub, black; ‡41, a stranger.

† *Without armour*.

‡ *Sighe*, i.e., fairies.

§ *Helmet*.

|| *Poignard*.

bald head, and a remarkably keen expression of eye. He had been heard to boast that the force and penetration of his glance enabled him to look down any man he encountered. As a speaker he possessed persuasive powers of no ordinary character, whilst his friends described him as being rarely endowed as a conversationalist. He was master of several languages,—Irish, English, Latin, and Norman-French,—and was well read in the Pandects, as well as the Brehon Code. Though now a subject of O'Farrell's, he was really a native of Kilkenny, and had been foisted into the clan by the haughty will of the chieftain, who was eminently imperative, like all chieftains, and "not to be gainsaid by any." Love of literature, and courtesy of manner, had recommended him to the notice of O'Farrell, who was a generous patron of literary men, bards, shanahies, and scallies—the dread and abhorrence of the English government. O'Farrell had made him his secretary in the first instance, and finally elevated him into the chair of chief Brehon, or judge,—a circumstance which gave rise to bitter heart-burnings, and finally tore asunder the O'Farrells, dividing them into two half-tribes, to the no small injury of both.

Turning from the last speaker, the Brehon addressed a military man, whose heavy visage indicated stupidity. If he lived in our days, we should compare him to a negro, his lips pouted so prodigiously. His contemporaries, less familiar with negroes, compared him to a horse, and called him Ecbeul, or horse-mouth. He was a sluggish character, as slow to move as an ox, but having once got into a groove, nothing could turn him out of it. This man, if he were to be credited, had likewise sat upon an ox-hide and solicited the assistance of swordsmen, whom he had enlisted in large numbers. "They were now," he said, "loitering in the vicinity of the lists, having visited Dublin to view the tournament; they could be brought together by a whistle, and be ready for action in a moment."

A similar statement was made by a tall, spare, sallow-complexioned man, belted in a girdle of withes, to which a fine sword was hung—a *fear bogha*,* whom the Brehon

* Archer.

complimented as the best of his recruiting agents. The last man who gave a report was a jongleur, or harper, with lanthorn jaws and flabby cheeks, his small red eyes looking obliquely through his bleared lids, which were overhung by bushy eyebrows that resembled the bristles of a boar. When the Brehon had listened to the harper, and given him some instructions, he rose and addressed the entire assembly, who heard him with profound respect and deep attention.

"Now," said he, "your duties are quite clear; I have already explained them to you; but, lest there should be any mistake, I shall explain them again. You shall move in twos through the multitude, and while one is engaged in making recruits, swearing in members, the other must keep the duals * in conversation, so as to divert attention from the enlistment. To swear men in, requires little fluency, so *you* will move with *him*. You are his mag's-man; he is your cross-man. This is the day of exertion. If you act well to-day, Ireland—Innis Banba—is free to-morrow. If you fail to-day, eternal ruin will overwhelm the country and ourselves. Swear in as many as you can before the great blow is struck—before the crowning effort is made. The mag's-man will talk any nonsense that comes uppermost, so as to divert and secure the attention of the duals. You will talk while he is working, and you will work while he is talking. Let nothing divert ye from this twofold duty. When we are strong enough, we will wash out the disgrace of Eire in the blood of the Sassanah churls. If you do your duty, and if O'Farrell be faithful, our triumph is certain. Everything depends upon you and O'Farrell."

"Who shall be king of Ireland?" asked one of the bystanders.

"Who shall be king? O'Farrell shall be king," replied the Brehon.

"Hurrah for O'Farrell!" exclaimed several voices simultaneously; "hurrah! hurrah!"

"'Tis yourself that ought to be king, then," said the Dollaher, for he fancied he could descry in the depths of

* Citizens of Dublin.

the Brehon's mind the ambition to "place his foot triumphantly upon the subject throne."

"That is a very foolish observation," said the Brehon, who spoke the Irish as the tongue most intelligible to his hearers. He affected to be displeased; but the Dollaher saw clearly that this was pure affectation. There was an absence of earnestness in his denunciation, which betrayed his *arrière pensee*. "Time enough to settle that," added the Brehon, "when the country is free."

"No time like the present," persisted the Dollaher, knowing very well that his remark met the approbation of at least one of his hearers. But the Brehon, who did not wish to be fathomed, silenced him by exclaiming authoritatively, "No more on that subject, sir."

"It isn't O'Farrell," growled the Buddha,* from Galway, "it's O'Connor ought to be kinged in Tara." This observation was answered with a scream of scornful laughter from a man with one eye, and sharkish teeth. "What?" said he, "is it Cathal O'Connor you mean? That's the poor *doon*† O'Connor keeps. You would not get as much flesh-meat in O'Connor's house as a fly would bear away in its pounces. There's not a man in his country killing beef at the present day, nor is there an inch of rind on the hollies, for the O'Connors strip away the bark to diminish their hunger. He king, indeed! No man able to go to hell would remain in his country. To *king* him would be to crown want, and give the sceptre to starvation!"

"How did you live in it, if it be so poor?"

"How did I live in it, is it?"

"Yes."

"I lived on *pp4ppn*."

"What is that?"

"I dried some wheat in the bottom of a pot, ground it with a quern, and then ate the meal mixed with new milk."

"That was wholesome food."

* *Buddha*, a clown.

† *Dun*, or *doon*, a hall.

CHAPTER XII.

"They passed the Elvira gate, with banners all displayed,
 They passed in mickle state, a noble cavalcade,
 What proud and pawing horses, what comely cavaliers,
 What bravery of targets, what glittering of spears."

LOCKHART'S *Spanish Ballads*.

As rumours had spread far and wide through the province of the spears,* of the magnificent tournaments in the city of the swords,† buzzing multitudes came swarming in at the very earliest dawn, especially the Dugals and Fingals, the O'Byrnes, O'Tuthils, and O'Kavanahs. Prodigious crowds, with their wives and children, came flocking and strolling from all directions. In their capacious mantles, pointed caps, and tight trews, these bearded strangers loitered round the thick-ribbed walls, gaped at the great portullises and heavy iron gates of the city, admired the noble cathedrals and grim towers—but above all, the great lists glaring with quaint devices, and curious emblazonry in Hoggen Green. These multitudes did not consist exclusively of spectators. Pious pilgrims, covered with dust, and brown with the weather, staff in hand, with long chaplets flowing from their girdles, came trooping and trudging in groups and clusters to perform their holy "stations" on bare knees round the diamond waters of St. John's well—jealously guarded by the tall lances and long white mantles of the Red Cross Knights of Kilmainham. This roaring and tumultuous scene presented the bustling appearance at once of a carnival, a fair, and a religious solemnity. There was a continuous advance like the flow of the tide in that sea of men—a moving file of piebald pedestrians—mounted horsemen with women behind them—and oxen-drawn cars. Among the crowds, the vociferous *flasgahs* ‡ were the most conspicuous, from those wands or staffs, nine feet high, made of ash, and garnished with bands of brass or yellow knobs, which they carried sturdily in their bony fists. This staff was a kind of portable

* *Leinster*.

† *Dublin*.

‡ From *fléas*, a wand.

signboard, which advertised the utility of the bearer without the circumlocution of a placard. These *plearje* were carried chiefly by *Ceards* or braziers, mummers, quacks, and *boccas*. The scene abounded with "Irish mimi" (a species of comic actors), *clairsaghers* (harpers), *tympanours* (tabourers), *crowthers* (the earliest violin-players), *ker-raghers* (players at chess or tables), *rhymers*, *skallys* (*raconteurs* or tale-tellers), bards, and others. Representatives of nearly all the tribes in Ireland might be found in this crowd, in their brilliant jackets glistening with gold, and their yellow tunics,* with ruffles garnishing the waist, with plaid cloaks and scarlet mantles; *barreads*† of many shapes, and *brogues* of many patterns. If we saw them now, we should laugh at the great "fell of hair" surmounted by a small cap which they gloried in, and the great beards, extending to their girdles, which concealed their necks. Here comes a crazy covered chariot, creaking and jolting slowly along, drawn lazily by two sluggish beeves, well-furnished with long horns, and having big staring eyes, looking apparently for some philosophic explanation of the noise and hubbub that thickens around them, but really smelling out and desirous of merely an additional meal of fresh grass. They lazily whisk away the flies with their swinging tails, and patiently waddle forward with their rumbling chariot, which is alive with children and women who have thus dilatorily travelled from some remote part of the interior, for weeks. Here is a beggar on his knees, making his way through the crowd with a great staff in his hands—a prodigious man, who, if he stood upright, must be apparently seven feet high. He is perpetually imploring alms, and repeating prayers in a rough, grim, clamorous tone; a hypocrite in the opinion of the worldly; a saint in the opinion of the poor. Lo! beyond there, an affrighted horse spreads destruction, as he makes his way at the top of his speed through the flying people, who clear the road for him with wonderful celerity, as he whirls away or tumbles down the wicker asyla of several families. Stationing ourselves among the ungreeted poor, who loiter near Dame Gate, we shall, unheeded by

* See cover.

† Caps.

haughty barons and fierce clansmen, observe those who sweep out of the city.

First, with the sound of banners, trumpet, and the joyous rattle of the drum, a pair of heralds—their tabards stiff with gold—came riding forth from between the famous towers that flank the renowned gate of our Lady in Dublin. Then a second pair of heralds, precisely similar to the first, and, like them, glistening in gilded tabards, rode out from that embattled portal. Then the train bands of the city, shouldering their halberds or pikes, and capped with morions, came, company after company, through that loop-holed and iron-studded gateway. Behind these striding pikemen, whose warden rode a termagant horse, came the legal functionaries, punctiliously pricking forward on sober geldings, one by one, at a snail's pace—the Lord Justiciary, the Lord Keeper, and other functionaries. Then the standard-bearer of Ireland emerged from the city, side by side with the sword-bearer of Ireland; and these were followed by the Earl of Kildare, riding a tall and powerful roan, brilliant with gorgeous caparisons of silk and silver. The Earl was guarded by a band of arquebusiers—stern-looking fellows, with crooked powder-horns gallantly slung at their side, with leathern pouches to hold their balls, and matchlocks in their hands. The most remarkable figure in the procession—at least, the figure that was most remarked—was the Marshal of the city, a small, thoughtful-looking man, with a well-proportioned person, a square forehead, and cheeks hollowed by time: well known among the townsmen by the familiar title of Tom Neylrod. A more knightly form than Tom's did not sally from Dame Gate. His waving plume was conspicuous for its size and beauty, and he sat his charger like a lord of high degree. An ardent champion of civic rights, and a fluent, if not an eloquent speaker, his appearance was hailed with a murmur of applause.

"More power to Tom!" "The scissors for ever!"
"Maybe Tom does not ride well."

A cloth merchant by trade, Tom exported those noble serges which an Italian poet has honoured by eulogizing. The splendour of his helmet, greaves, and cuisses, glowing with gold, might be equalled, but could not be surpassed;

and his diminutive stature was compensated by the tallness of his charger, and height of his plume. Winding out of the city, through the magnificent gate of our Lady, the cavalcade thundered over the hollow drawbridge which then spanned the river Poddle—a river that skirted the walls and filled the fosses of Dublin; and, with all their pennons flying, the Fingallian horsemen, who looked like moving masses of polished steel, came sweeping into Hoggen Green with a great circuit, where they drew up, amid the hurrahs of the mob. The sports of the day had already commenced with the melodious thunder of martial music,—for the arena was early occupied by two blind men, whose clumsy eagerness to secure a well-greased pig, which slipped out of their clutches with wonderful lubricity, were contemplated with roars of rude laughter by the plebeians.

CHAPTER XIII.

"How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rest unburnish'd, not to shine in use.
Though much is taken, much abides; and tho'
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven, that which we are, we are;
One equal temper of heroic hearts
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive—to seek—to find—and not to yield."—TENNYSON.

STILL loitering, with the reader's kind permission, beside the good and battlemented portal—the renowned gate of our Lady—to which the cowering duals* were so often indebted for security—that firm gate, which so often resisted and rolled back the exasperated torrent of stormy clansmen—all swords, and plumes, and hubbub—let us, blended with the *ṛṛṁḃaḃaḃe*,† as becomes humble men like us, still contemplate the procession.

Now the great O'Farrell rides out, with brown moustache, keen eye, and massive frame. Mark how well he rides—

* *Dubḃal*, now Doyle; *i. e.*, a Dane.

† *Shoolers*, strollers.

the lordly and eagle-eyed chieftain. See the richness of his crimson *Jonat*, extending from the neck to the knee, trimmed with gold, and somewhat resembling a short pelisse. The crimson of his pelisse looks singularly brilliant, because it is seen through the silvery reticulations of the shining shirt of mail which sheathes his person, having been superinduced over the pelisse. Just glance at the *zencpur*, or war-belt, that girdles his silvery coat of mail: it deserves your attention—resembling saffron in colour, it is studded with gems, and is, you perceive, hung with tassels of gold. That must be a valuable weapon—that long blue-edged *skein* which glistens in the tie of his starry war-belt. Above all, take notice of the cone-shaped helmet which towers upon his haughty and well-curled head. On its spherical and dazzling surface some viny ramifications have been carved by a cunning artizan.

Among the gossiping lookers-on, the appearance of O'Farrell becomes at once the subject of general hubbub.

"That is a gallant horse your chieftain rides," says a one-eyed *dual*,* to a jongleur or harper, whom his keen eye perceived or suspected to be a clansman of O'Farrell's. With the deep-thinking craft of hardened villany, he always spoke as if his surmises were convictions.

"Horse! Is it that horse? In the five *Koogst* of Erin you would not find the fellow of that horse," said the jongleur, thrown off his guard.

"Eire is a large place," replied the one-eyed dual, shrewdly perusing him, while smiling to see his own surmises realized.

"Large as it is, then, there is not with the kings, princes, dukes, or arch-dukes of Erin, a horse like the same *Oerhrianny*."†

"You know his pedigree, then?" observed the *dual*, with the same air of crafty inquiry.

"There's no pedigree with him," replied the jongleur, in a low tone of serious reflection.

"No pedigree? How is that?"

"You see," said the jongleur, drawing nearer to him,

* *Dub3al*, a Doyle, a Dane, a Dublin man.

† *Districts*.

‡ *Oj11r1j41413*, golden-bitted.

"there be certain lakes in my country, out of which a mare of black colour and beautiful shape used to rise every evening. It used to graze the margin quietly all night, and plunge again into the water when the first fires of sunrise crimsoned the oiméar.* Well, it so happened that a cunning bórac,† who lived near the lake, captured this mysterious mare that lived at the bottom of the water. And the noble courser the chieftain rides is a foal of the enchanted mare the peasant captured. Oh! that's the horse; there is no use in talking. As the sun is grander than the stars, that steed is better than other horses. Surely *Oerhrianny* is the high-spirited, fleet-running, loud-neighing horse."

"He is certainly a fine destrier; and the man who rides him is a noble chief."

"He is the lordly tree of the wood," answered the jongleur, smiling proudly.

"O aymryu na ccuimó,‡ his like was not in Ireland."

A singular incident interrupted the gossipers. When riding out of the city, O'Farrell glanced at the sea of heads—the plebeians swarming and jammed together on either side of him—and saw with surprise one small spot remain unoccupied; a point of vacancy which, making its way constantly through the multitude, drew nearer and nearer to him.

"What can this be?" the chieftain asked himself. "Why is this small space left vacant?" He soon received the solution of the enigma. In the centre of the path, which constantly opened and constantly closed, a strange, small object soon became perceptible to O'Farrell. This was a creeping man—if, indeed, it could be called a man—a diminutive bacac,§ who, with difficulty and labour, came hobbling along, with something like the motion, and almost the dimensions, of a crab. Two small four-legged stools, no bigger than the human hand, were firmly clutched by this pigmy, who was sitting on the ground. Clapping these two stools at the same moment on the earth, by way of feet—for he had apparently suffered amputation—he swung

* South-east.

† A clown.

‡ Since the days of the heroes.

§ bacacó, a cripple.

himself forward a small space, sweeping the earth as he moved.

In this creeping way he got on at a snail's pace, the crowd opening to make way for him with as much respect as if the cripple were a king. Owing to the kindness of the multitude, the pigmy enjoyed ample room, though in the struggle to clear a vacancy every other individual was more or less crushed. He was cowed in a triangular scarf, or mantle, which disguised his features by hooding his face. But on his hands might be discerned some traces of the leprosy,—an appearance which was frequently counterfeited by beggars, who washed their hands in ox-blood, mingled with bran, to give them that appearance, and which, therefore, created little alarm in the multitude. In truth, he was not (or, at least, did not seem to O'Farrell) much bulkier than a child.

CHAPTER XIV.

"And from the farthest wards was heard
The rush of coming feet,
And the broad stream of flags and pikes
Rushed down each rousing street,
And broader still became the blaze,
And louder still the din,
As fast from every village round,
The horse came spurring in."—MACAULAY.

THE hunter who pursues game in the midst of the wilderness is, according to illiterate writers, the happiest of the human race. Refreshed by freedom, and chequered with vicissitude, his life, it is supposed, is enlivened by the excitement of change, and free from the wearisome uniformity which makes civilized existence unsupportably monotonous. But this is a mistake. The happiness which is predicted of the savage is really possessed by the beggar. The mendicant enters a great city as the hunter enters a great forest. Like him, he is engaged in a chase, animated with the keen excitements of casualty, and chequered with the fascinations of vicissitude. Alternately depressed by

fear, and elated by hope, the tediousness of ordinary life is banished by the agitation of a pleasing anxiety. Every meal is a victory, which, won by solicitation, is invariably consumed with a hearty appetite. No man is so happy as the sturdy beggar. The sour and sweets of life are so felicitously blended in the tessellated cup of his life, that if to-day he starve, to-morrow he dines with a relish and satisfaction that compensates amply for his temporary hunger. However, should the reader doubt this statement, the test is not difficult—let him try!

While the grand procession from the church of the Holy Trinity to the lists in Hoggen Green was sweeping by in quaint, grotesque, and gorgeous splendour, with blazoned tabard and sounding trumpet, with flashing lance and blazoned shield, with every variety of costume—barbed horses and mail-clad riders—the *bocca* roared aloud: "Oh! good Christians! the light of glory to your souls, and give a little charity to the poor, poor *bocca*—a horn of drink, or a *meskaun* of butter—a grain of meal, or a streak of flax—or a bit of a chicken, or anything at all in place of them, and God have it in store before you on the last day, I pray the saints, Amen. *Sonas ort*, my lord; *Sonas ort*, my lady. Oh! heaven shower prosperity and happiness on your two heads, and place your sons on proud, high, prancing horses, and shield you with His mighty arm from the *gíolla gíleán*,* that would whisk away your beautiful darlings, like the innocent brood of the piebald hen. Oh! good Christians, give your charity to the poor, helpless, lame *bocca*, and it's he will pray for you for ever, and do hard penance for your final salvation,—the penance of the well of *Issa*,† the penance of the fountain of Bride, and the penance of the Lord of the Sabbath-day—the red lake,‡ and the slab-stone of St. Dona. Oh, good Christians! take pity, and have compassion on that poor, lame, friendless object, that's crying from want, and craving your charity; and may your sins be light, and your deservings heavy, in the just balance of the angel Michael, on the terrible day when our souls are weighed in the nice scales

* *Gílla gíleán*, the devil.

† *Íosa*, Jesus.

‡ *Loch reáin*, the red lake.

of the great Judge. Oh! Sir Knight, the champion of the weak, the hero of green Eire, put the crown of mercy on the helmet of valour, and you'll have victory in war, and luck in the tournament. Oh! dear lady, have pity on him that's weak, and lame, and crippled, and sore, and hoarse with fruitless crying for charity. Oh! thou rosy branch of flowering beauty, turn thy bright eyes on the poor helpless beggar. Oh! extend that generous hand, unrivalled in beauty, and brilliant with rings, to my relief this day. Oh! lady dear, there is always compassion for poverty in a breast that's whiter than snow! Mouth of wisdom and pearl of beauty! lovely winner of the highest garland when virgins compete for palm of supremacy! Oh! polished mirror of the women of Fola! Charming daughter of an excellent father, and the very best mother that ever was seen on the face of the earth! Fragrant head with the clustering ringlets, that shall surely marry the imperial son of the mighty king below the ocean, turn your radiant, compassionate, beautiful eyes on the sorrowful, weak, poor, hoarse, crippled old man, who has no spot to rest his white head, when the rapid descent of the evening sun leaves him desolate in darkness, groping alone, alone, alone!"

"Thighe a *vourneen*,* you'll never succeed with that funeral dirge. Try a song, man. Give the ladies a song," exclaimed a voice in the crowd.

"Yes, give us a song," vociferated two or three of the bystanders; "give them a song, and they'll give you a largess."

Encouraged by this exhortation, the *bocca* coughed, and "made as if about" to sing, but apparently losing heart. "There's no music in me: God help me! no music at all," the cripple screamed out.

"Take courage, man! Sing a verse in praise of the ladies: that's what will open their hearts!"

Thus strongly encouraged, the cripple, after a world of refusals and scratchings, coughed again, and finally began in the voice of a goat:—

"Here's a health to the laugh of her lov'd little lips;
There's no music in Greece but that sound might eclipse;

* Darling.

Faith, the workman well knew how to fashion the fair,
Who arranged her white teeth with such exquisite care!"

"Hurrah for Thigue! there never was a better song!"

"Quaff a cup to her bosom, as smooth as the plumes
Of the dove on its nest that's embower'd in perfumes;
Though it's veiled in the blossoms, and coyly at rest,
Yet the hand of a poet shall rifle the nest.

"Come, a health to her hand, all so snowy and small,
For the harp-strings it strikes grow mellifluous all;
Not a leaf in the forest, nor bird in the air,
But it lives on the web she embroiders with care.

"Drink a health to her cheek, where the bloom of the rose
By the side of the lily luxuriantly glows;
In her heart, and her soul, there's a radiance divine,
And it lights all her form like the lamp of a shrine.

"Come, a health to the nymph, from the top to the toe,
For her smile beams delight on a minstrel, I know;
There never was a tale from the time of the flood,
But the bright one could tell you the tale if she would."

"Oh! good Christians, take pity and compassion on the poor lame man, that has no place on the face of the wide world to rest his poor limbs, but the back of the rock, or the hole of the mountain. He that is as desolate as the bird in the air, or the *μαρτυρα αλτα* * that skulks in the wood. His plough never furrows the field; his scattered corn never sprinkles the earth. He owns no bellowing herd to meet him in the evening, lowing for the pail. In his plantation the cuckoo never sings; and when every haggard is crowded with corn, the poor man has not a sheaf. He has no friend to lighten his load, no wife to cheer his despair, and no companion to comfort him. Oh! pity the desolate outcast who meets no welcome from little or big, or young or old, or great or humble, in city or town, in baron's hall or swineherd's hut, but cold looks and bitter rebukes. Oh! pity the poor lame man whose friends are down below the ground, with long grass flourishing over them. Oh! oh! oh! they're dead and gone,—they're dead and gone who left him friendless, and poor, and banished, and sore, to creep upon crutches and hobble on stools, a poor, helpless atom

* The wolf.

in the big, broad, devouring mouth of the voracious world."

"Oh! that's a holy man," exclaimed a one-eyed fellow in the crowd, with a confidential emphatic manner. "That's a holy man," he whispered.

"'Tis the black mark that was set upon him," observed a bystander, in allusion to a popular persuasion that personal deformity was a token of God's displeasure.

"Believe me," said the one-eyed speaker, "he was not always a cripple. For seven years he lived, to my knowledge, in a black cave in Borna Breena, doing penance night and day. Well, at the end of the seven years, they say he prayed one day for a *falaing** to comfort his poor bones: 'If you're cold in this cave,' said a solemn voice, 'go out and warm yourself in my sunshine,' said the voice. 'Oh, merciful Father!' said the poor hermit,—for he was always a little light in the head, 'is it no *falaing* you have to give me, only the sun.' 'If you wait for seven days,' answered the voice, 'you shall have a *falaing*.' Well, about a week after, he was sitting one evening at the mouth of his cave, when he saw a brother *bocca* slowly hobbling down the ravine, and he trailing behind him a *falaing*† that was worn, and tattered, and patched. 'Oh, Lord!' said the hermit, when he had examined it, 'is that all you could find me in seven days?' and with these words (you should not laugh, good people) he lost the use of his limbs, and he has been hobbling, as you see him, from that day to this."

"Oh! it was rheumatism he got," interposed a bystander.

"Oh! poverty is a great virtue," observed the one-eyed speaker, apparently deaf to this explanation; "poverty is a great virtue. There was Guaire, king of Connaught,—you have all heard of Guaire, I suppose?—he never had more than one horse in his stables, and one suit of clothes in his chest. He gave all to the poor. Oh! poverty is a great virtue."

O'Farrell felt that kindness to physical decrepitude is a powerful evidence of mental refinement. He therefore felt gratified on observing the benevolence of the populace, in

* Mantle,

† *Falaing*, mantle.

giving free room to the pithless cripple, in a throng through which a giant would in vain have struggled to force a way. Moved with compassion at the helpless decrepitude of the pigmy, O'Farrell took his dagger from his party-coloured belt,—“a well-formed weapon, blue-edged, sharp-pointed, and white-backed,” the golden sheath and ivory haft of which were studded with gems, and the whole of which was worth three hundred pounds in modern money,—and jerked it to the mendicant, who, catching it like a monkey, poured out a rhapsody of benedictions on the donor as he eyed it with rapture, scabbard, blade, and hilt.

If this precious and dazzling gift had not been flung to him by the generous but disdainful hand of the chief, the cripple might have continued to creep. As it was, the gift worked a miracle. In the glitter of the gold his lameness disappeared; and, starting up, he stood six feet high in the street! The shout with which the multitude closed in on him at once was full of joy and derision; but the Dollaher—for this was he—met them, plunged into the thick of them, and immediately disappeared.

CHAPTER XV.

“Many’s the frolic fight we had,
 For many a time you’ve made me mad;
 But while I’ve a heart, ’twill never be sad,
 While you smile at me full on the table.
 Assuredly you are my wife and brother,
 My only child, my father and mother,—
 My outside coat, I have no other,—
 Oh! I’ll stand by you while I’m able!”

Ode to Aqua Vita.

A FAMOUS writer on Irish affairs, named Stanihurst describes the gallowglasses of Ireland as “gentlemen, tall of stature and grim of face, whose weapon is a kind of pole axe.”

A group of such men, “picked and selected from the mere Irish for their great and mighty bodies,” were seated in a bothy, or shed—a wicker-work canopy—where they

could view the procession as it wound along to the lists. They were not altogether idle. They sat round a board or table, and quaffed a mixture of milk and usquebaha from four-cornered vessels of wood. Whenever a "shaven crown," the cowed figure of a monk, came, staff in hand, shambling by these dare-devils—"the steel-basinated rascals" hailed him with a shout of derision. "Cjonhur an atarh," they roared, laughingly, "cjonhur mun atarh leannah,"—"Sir Monk, how fares thine harlot?" When a sudden hectic mantled the attenuated face of the friar, their mirth swelled to ecstasy, and a hoarse explosion of savage laughter, bursting discordantly from their grinning mouths, followed the interrogatory. Strange to say, the man who thus insulted the monk turned on his companion, who had insulted nobody. "How now, varlet!" he roared. "How now, kitchen-page! In my presence to mock the man of God! I would have thee to wit, Sir Scullion, thou slightest no holy man in my hearing;" and then, with his bony hand he affected to rain blows on his unoffending comrade, a rich smile glowing on his lips, and a forced frown scowling on his brow. Then the monk having disappeared, the gallowglass exclaimed: "Comrades all, since the friar shows no fight, let us have a hilt. Come, young hemp! Come, young grapple-the-rails, give us a squeak!"

The party thus courteously addressed lost no time in quavering, in the voice of a goat,—

I.

"I went to the wood, says Robin to Bobbin,
I went to the wood, says Bobbin to Rob;
I went to the wood, says Ion O'Dunn,
I went to the wood, says every one.

II.

"What to do there? says Bobbin to Robin,
What to do there? says Robin to Bob;
What to do there? says Ion O'Dunn,
What to do there? says every one.

III.

"To shoot at a doe, says Bobbin to Robin,
To shoot at a doe, says Robin to Bob;
To shoot at a doe, says Ion O'Dunn,
To shoot at a doe, says every one.

IV.

"How did you fare? says Bobbin to Robin,
 How did you fare? says Robin to Bob;
 How did you fare? says Ion O'Dunn,
 How did you fare? says every one.

V.

"Our quarry was poor, says Bobbin to Robin,
 Our quarry was poor, says Robin to Bob;
 Our quarry was poor, says Ion O'Dunn,
 Our quarry was poor, says every one."

Thus the singer went on, inventing verses as he proceeded, to something like twenty stanzas, and quite ready, apparently, to go on to five hundred, when, losing all patience, the brawny gallowglass exclaimed,—

"Come, Bobbin us no more! I'd liever be put to bed with a mattock than furthermore hear thee. Sir, in one word," he continued, striking his palm against the board with a force that made it jump with the detonation of a hand-gun, "thou shalt no longer rhyme! *Dar Criosd*, I'm all amorst to hear thee! Mean'st thou to rhyme us to unreason? Thou hast a good voice to beg bacon, forsooth. Come, brush and lope! By bess and glynn, an' thou art not as bold as a miller's shirt,* to squeak thy black psalm in the company of gentlemen of the blade, I am no Christian. By the body of my champion, I'll prove that thy Robin and thy Bobbin, and Ion O'Dunn were unmentionable knaves—bare-legged losels—a scurvy ribald—and meet furniture for a gallows. Nay, black villains, and should never be introduced into a free company of soldiers and gentlemen of the blade. I bar witchcraft! Mean'st thou to rhyme us to unreason?"

After this escapade, the gallowglass retired to his seat, and having stretched his huge limbs—large enough to carry an elephant—he exclaimed, "I'll show thee how to handle thy throat. I'll show thee how a gentleman should quaver! Hearken unto me, and be edified." With these words the gallowglass, leaning back in his chair, roared the following song:—

* A miller's shirt collars a rogue: it is therefore said to be endowed with courage.

I.

"Give this object an alms, for he's sick, sore, and sad,
And may Heaven make your little ones all lusty and glad;
'Oh! you scurvy rape-calling, how dare you come here,
Where your doxy this moment was gulping my beer."

II.

"Why, you skinny old beldame, you're hideous to see!
You should blush to belie a poor pilgrim like me;
For it's seven sad years, by my black shirt I swear,
Since I buried my Bride, with her long flowing hair."

III.

"The mist from the mountain o'ershadows the day,
And fish beyond counting abound in the bay;
There's another old shark and a trull by his side,
Who beg, steal, and stroll through the whole world wide."

IV.

"I'm trudging to Louth in my blanket so brown,
And a hood of old hose as a cap on my crown;
With my bags on my left, and my bags on my right,
Ever bulky with meal when I lag home at night."

V.

"Should I meet with a maid and her wheel at her knee,
When her mammy's at market, and no one to see,
I shall sit by her side, and with whisperings low,
Praise her cheek beyond roses, her neck beyond snow."

VI.

"I shall purchase a rope of a beautiful twist,
Which I'll tie to her arm, and grasp in my fist;
If a good-looking gaffer should venture too near,
I'll tighten her tether, and pull in my dear."

"May that be your seven years' sickness," roared several simultaneously, when the gallowglass had concluded his ditty. "May that be your seven years' sickness," they repeated, striking the table at the same time, by way of lending rhetorical emphasis to their eulogy.

"A better song," cried a solitary voice, whose owner singularly enough was termed "Red Eyebrows"—"a better song was never sung since Parolan with the big brogues landed in Innis Banba."

The singer smiled broadly at the flattery of his parasites; for every great man has his parasites, and why not the singer?

"You should have sung that song," muttered Eqbeul, a brute of a fellow with a lowering brow, speaking very emphatically, "when dressed in the character."

The singer winked with affected indifference, though disconcerted by the remark; he changed countenance, observing, "You're a very foolish fellow," but meaning, "You're a crafty vagabond." But, like other great men, he did not say what he meant. He affected indifference—exclaiming, by way of apology, with a flourish, "*Si Dieu se faisait homme d'armes*," as the Frenchman says, "*il serait pillard*," and then he chirruped, and whistled, and seemed very merry, and was certainly noisy. Eqbeul was indebted for his name to the conformation of his lips—they pouted excessively. In modern times they might no doubt be compared to those of a negro: our ancestors, less familiar with negroes, compared them to those of a horse. Hence he was named Eqbeul, which means *horse-mouth*. He was a slow sort of character, and was conscious of his slowness. With a head as thick as his lips, he delighted in showing shrewdness, and occasionally made hits that disconcerted wiser people. His body was powerful, but his mind was weak—a weakness which disclosed itself in his cups. On the present occasion, so soon as he was half drunk—in a maudlin state—tears stood in his moist eyes, which reminded you of those of a bull. He blubberingly grasped a comrade's hand. For a moment, he could not speak—his intense sentimentality choked him. At last he gasped out, with moist lips and wiping his eyes,—

"Ah, my troubadour!"—and, by the way, he applied this epithet to every living thing—dogs, men, or horses—they were all troubadours. "Ah, my troubadour," he repeated, with what was intended to be a most winning, but was really a grim smile, "should I pass the *thooah** to the left;" and the speaker made a sinister motion with his big finger, meaning to say, "Should I die suddenly." "Bury me like a Christian." He grasped his comrade's hand. "Two inches, if you have no time to go deeper—but some clay at all events! Eh?" His comrade reciprocated the pressure. "Never fear, my hearty, I'll be your grave-digger. But

* Battle-axe.

this is no time for codicils. A fig for sorrow—let us have a song.”

“A song, a song,” shouted several simultaneously; “silence for the song.” And the first singer, who was honoured with the name of “Young Hemp,” coughed and began, after some solicitation:—

I.

“You’ll see me on my *garran*,* a-jogging to the fair,
With my wife upon a pillion, arrayed in raiment rare;
And you’ll feel such bitter envy to see the match I made,
It will never leave your bosom till you’re bedded with a spade.”

II.

“Why should I feel a passion so fatal to my life?
Why should I die of sorrow, although I’m not your wife?
Or, who could prize a false one, deception all his trade,
Who, every Sunday morning, adores a different maid?”

III.

“Your clansmen love to vapour and boast about their kine,—
They say, you’re very wealthy, and never must be mine.
I scorn to flatter mortal—I heed not who they be—
They’ll wed you to a laggard—a lout of low degree.”

IV.

“Fair Sir, I’d give you freely possession of my hand;
But gossips whisper shrewdly you’ve neither house nor land.
You squander all your winnings in waassail, wine, and beer;
And that’s the worst of ways, Sir, to keep a house, I hear.”

V.

“I’ll never take the trouble to force you to comply:
Your clan is blamed for treason, your temper hot and high.
I’ll spend my winnings freely, with laughter, mirth, and wine,
Nor care a single rush, love, though you be never mine.”

VI.

“And do you not remember, beneath the rowan tree,
When seated in the cowslips, the oath you swore to me?
I never told my mammy—I kept my promise true—
And now, alas! you leave me, a dire disgrace to you.”

VII.

“You’ll wed a ragged cow-boy, in indigence to pine,
And many a gloomy day, love, you’ll weep you were not mine.
He’ll load you with a pannier, and bind you with a cord:
You’ll curse the day you slighted the soldier and his sword.”

* A hackney.

Though this song was received, as it deserved, with general applause, Eqbeul was still lugubrious. He stretched out his palm, or rather his paw, and implored promise of inhumation. His eyes were not remarkable for vivacity, but they had the tranquil placidity of Herculean power. If beauty did not mould the contour of his lips, his ears, to make amends, glittered with small gold pendants. He was always remarkable for the polish of his hawberk—his mail shone like silver. There was not a man in his "battle" whose axe and armour were more faultless when the company was paraded on state days. It was a common observation, that if the rock of Dunamaise were to march, it would not move with more steadiness than this big-lipped and lubberly axeman. Beside him sat a kern, who had been more favoured by nature than the gallowglass, but less by fortune. The sharp blade of a "skian," in some hot and perilous encounter with the clamorous O'Byrnes, had caused his nose to deviate slightly from the native perpendicular—it had got a twist, which detracted from the regularity of his features. With the view of drowning the lugubrious solicitations of Eqbeul, this man, whose voice was good, though his features were disfigured, roared out,—

"When my lord of the Marches
Rides out of his hall,
For to ransack the forest
With kernes so tall,
All music and pride,
At the dawn of the day;
With their war-axe and dirk,
And their martial array,
They're as fierce as the wolf,
They're as swift as the deer,
Without mantle or shoon,
Without mercy or fear:
We should kill them, the villains,
As dead as a stone;
Yet will folk say it's wiser
To let them alone.
Oh! my lord of the Marches
Is stern and brave;
And the outlaws he catches,
No mercy can save."—

"There's a hole in the ballad. Can any one favour us with the rest of it?"

"Well, if any one could, my hearty, it is the comely troubadour who furnished us with the first."

Here a harper, or *jongleur*, with lanthorn jaws and hollow flabby cheeks, his small red eyes looking obliquely through his bleared eyelids, overhung by bushy eyebrows, resembling the bristles of a boar, was hailed by Malomna as "Captain-general of the ragged army." In compliance with the rude invitation of the axeman, the jongleur appeared at the entrance of the booth. He was one of those musical botches who roamed among the common herd, because they were not gifted enough to figure in the baron's hall or chieftain's "dune." He was received with a shout, or rather a scream of welcome, because the lugubrious pleadings of Eqbeul were certain to be drowned in the twangings of his *claursha*. He was taken by the hand, seated at the board, and presented with a four-cornered *mether* of mead, which was accompanied with the Irish proverb, "a draught before a tale." "A generous man is a fragrant rose," answered the harper with another proverb, smiling, as he took the *mether* in two hands. Having swallowed his draught, and wiped his lips in the wide yellow sleeve of his *lene*,* he jangled the *tearoda*† of his instrument, and burst into song, by way of compensation for his reception:—

" 'Arise, fair maid, never sleep so sound,
While your true love is mourning in grief profound.
If you quickly arise, we shall hasten soon
On our fleet fair steeds into rich broad Muan.'

" 'Sir Knight, of your love let me know your name,
Lest I fall, when afar, into grief and shame.'
'Fair maid, you shall know neither woe nor sin;
And the name of your knight is Sir Ristead O'Brin.

" 'I hold fair halls in which chiefs attend,
And the lord of the greenwood must wait and bend.'
'A chief who has castles and knights at call,
Has some beautiful maid in his lofty hall.

" 'If lordly hands fill your wine-cup high,
You need not a handmaid so humble as I.'
'Oh hasten with me to my bower of state,
Where there's mantling wine, and where barons wait;

* *Lene*; surplice.

† *tearoda*, cords.

For revel, and dance, and joy are there,
And a golden pallet, which you shall share.'

" 'Sir, I'm not used, in my father's shed,
To see wine-cups shine when the board is spread;
Nor music, nor revel, nor joy is there,
Nor golden pallet, which I can share.'

" 'Away, love, away to that western wold,
Where horses are waiting with bridles of gold;
And comfort a heart you have broken in twain,
Distress me no longer, nor sport with my pain,'"

"How many soldiers, think'st thou, there be in Dublin to-day?" queried Malomna.

"Soldiers!" roared the other in high disdain—"soldiers, quotha! There be Kildare hogs enow, and Fingallian swine, and Longford rubbish enough; but as for soldiers, by the immortal lord of war, all the soldiers in Dublin gather round this board!"

"Well said! well said! Ha! ha! ha! Thou'rt right, by the Mass! By the hand of my chieftain, I believe thee!"

"Nay, nay; the kerns are fine fellows!" exclaimed another. "Remember the old song,—

'The burghers quail
Within the pale,
To see the piebald braccan;*
While wanton wiles,
And sweetest smiles
From beauty bless the braccan.
The braccan! the braccan!
The many-tinted braccan!

Princesses' hands
Have spun the bands
That form the noble braccan.
Hurrah, then, for the braccan.
Hurrah, then, for the braccan.

'Devoid of fear
The boys appear,
The wights that wear the braccan;
In danger's hour, the braccan;
In beauty's bower, the braccan.
The kings who wore
The crown of yore,
They shouting showed the braccan—
The braccan! the braccan!
The crimson-coloured braccan!'"

* Pronounced *braccan*, the plaid; the Latin, *Bracca*.

At this moment young Lord Howth, pale with his vigil, came riding in procession to the lists with retainers :—

“Both with bill, bow, and brand,
It was a noble sight to see;
Hardier men, both in heart and hand,
Were not in Christendie.”

When one of the gallowglasses, animated, doubtless, by *aqua vite*, elevated his battle hatchet high in the air, and shouted in a peculiar tone, “Thursday night!” the young knight thrilled in his saddle, and almost bounded, while the gallowglass, flopping into his seat, called ferociously and drunkenly on the minstrel, “Come, my game chicken, strum us another tune from your three-cornered jingle.”

In ready compliance with this rude request, the minstrel twanged,—

“I saw the black knave, with his back to the tide—
With his hand on his forehead, his shoon wet beside.
Oh, false one! oh, false, you’re shadowed with shame!
Oh, falsest of false ones, and falsehood’s your name!

“They told me last week, and they told me to-day,
With the black knave she went in the wine-house to play;
Oh, false one! oh, false one! o’ershadowed with shame,
You’re the falsest of false ones, and falsehood’s your name!

“I went to the town, and strolled through the fair,
And I drank myself drunk, just to lighten my care;
Oh, false one! oh, false one, o’ershadowed with shame!
You’re the falsest of false ones, and falsehood’s your name!

“The cheeks of the children are streamy and sad;
Though I empty the flagon, my heart is not glad;
Oh, false one! oh, false one! you’re shadow’d with shame;
You are falsest of false ones, and falsehood’s your name!”

CHAPTER XVI.

“Think, when we talk of horses, that you see them
Printing their proud hoofs in the receiving earth.”

SHAKESPEARE.

ON the skirts of Hoggen Green, crowded with men, cattle, and horses, great fires were smouldering in vast holes,

scooped in the soil, over which capacious boilers were suspended on a complex construction of forked timber, and, nearer at hand, oxen were roasting whole, with great order and solemnity,—four of these animals, when duly roasted, being sufficient for a band of kernes, consisting, as the band invariably did, of forty men, with their *gillies*.*

Ever and anon, fresh *craghts* † of cattle, bellowing vociferously, were seen wending their way through the multitude; while Irish tongues, with characteristic volubility, were wrangling with reference to these *craghts*. The cry of “Crayoth, cayree, uhth,” frequently sounded over the hum and buzz of the congregation, and announced the approach of a new herd of mountain kine, which, at the goading instigations and loud shouts of their drivers, made their difficult way to their destination. These drivers, by the way, were armed with clubs and *maydogues*—a kind of short sword, with which the wearers made battle, when overtaken by their pursuers, the latter being very often the right owners of the cattle.

These men were strangers to tillage—a nomadic tribe, who lived in waggons or carts, roofed with skins, and wandered from place to place, with their wives, children, parents, and cattle; yet, with all their lawlessness, they were subordinate to leaders, whom they themselves selected. Here a gang of rascally horse-boys and apprentices were eagerly employed in playing at “pitch-and-toss,” blended with a chattering tribe of “mona shules” ‡—females in a mantle and smock—the inseparable concomitants of those military underlings. Shouts of pure exultation arose from the horse-boys, when a powerful charger or dextrier, with fiery eye and distended nostril, barbed from counter to tail, with frontlet of steel and heavy axe at the saddle-bow, came prancing proudly, with arched neck, forward, guided by a lad whose imperturbable features and cold blue eye betrayed his Saxon blood.

The exultation of the mob of apprentices was occasioned by the appearance of the charger—an appearance which tacitly promised a long and stirring continuance of the jousts.

* *Gillies*, servants. † *Craghts*, a drove. ‡ *mona ríulapóche*.

"Who owns the horse?" queried a man with one eye, coming to the side of the young equery.

"His master."

"And, sir, prythee, who is his master?"

"He who owns him."

"Thou art very courteous; and, prythee, who are both?"

"Both is not in the mystery. There be but one."

"And who is he?"

"My master."

"Hath he no name?"

"He hath a name—a good and a noble."

"Then he bears an ape on his shield."

"He would, an' he bore thee."

"An' thou answer'st me so again," said the angry interrogator, his one eye flashing, and fingering his poignard, as he spoke, "I'll kill thee."

"Thou hog's draff, why questionest thou me?" roared the page; and, quick as lightning, he also unsheathed his poignard.

The burgher, with faltering hand, slunk away from the glowing face of the youth, and was soon lost in the crowd.

While restraining the proud plungings of this noble steed, and leading him along by the bridle, a figure suddenly stood before the boyish leader of the charger, shrouded in a hooded mantle, which cowed his head, and draped his limbs, and completely enveloped his interior costume. It was one of those famous Irish mantles which, according to an English writer, sheltered the wearer "from the wrath of heaven, from the offence of earth, and from the sight of men." The figure was of apparently colossal height and proportionate bulk; but his face, shrouded by the profuse fringe of his capacious mantle, seemed too low for his height—that is, his breast ought to be where his face seemed to be situated. At sight of this noble and dignified person, calm and lofty, the youth, so bold a moment ago, turned pale, and the snorting and alarmed charger seemed to participate in the fears of the young equery. The stranger, who was no other than O'Farrell, having slowly made the circuit of the charger, and viewed it on every hand, and—seeming satisfied with

its appearance, by a single gesture of his right arm he stripped his person of his mantle, and flung it to the *golla eac*, or varlet. His appearance, when thus stripped, excited in the bystanders an ejaculation of admiration. Sheathed from top to toe in shining steel, his face concealed by the bars of his helmet, he stood as it were a statue of burnished and glittering metal. His greaves, his cuisses, his vambraces, and his helm, were polished to dazzling brightness, shining like a mirror, and glowing with gold. Holding the steed by the head, and with surprising activity vaulting from the earth, he seated himself in the saddle by a wonderful effort of agility, and rode slowly and proudly toward the lists. The moment he did so, the one-eyed questioner dropped on his knees, and invoked curses on the rider with great passion and savage vehemence: "May the plough never furrow your land!" he exclaimed, raising his hands to heaven as he spoke, "nor your field be ever sprinkled with grain; may the cuckoo never sing in your withered trees, nor the herd meet you in the evening, lowing for the pail; may your only home be the back of a rock, or a cave in the mountain; may no friend lighten your grief, no wife diminish your sorrow, no companion console you; may you meet no welcome from little or big, rich or poor, but cold looks and bitter rebukes, taunting words, and barbed sarcasms; may all your race sink in the ground, and the long grass flourish over them; may heaven shower misfortune on your head every day you get up; may your children be blasted, and your descendants come to shame; may your enemies trample on your hopes, and the gilly gilleen * whisk away your little ones; may your life be wretched, and your death disgraceful, and your sins heavy in the great scales of the angel Michael; may you be deprived of house and kindred, and friends and neighbours, and become lonely as the heron in the air, or the wolf that skulks in the mountains; may your food be mare's flesh, and your only drink cold water; may you be poor and friendless, banished, and sore—a helpless atom in the big, broad, devouring mouth of the hungry world."

Having relieved his mind by this torrent of execration,

* The Devil.

the one-eyed speaker rose from his knees, apparently lightened and relieved by the satisfactory sense of having done his duty, and punished by objurgation what he deemed national dereliction.

CHAPTER XVII.

“There’s something strange, I know not what,
 Come o’er me,
 Some phantom I’ve for ever got
 Before me;
 I look on high, and in the sky
 ’Tis shining;
 On earth its light, with all things bright,
 Seems twining.
 Sometimes, like two bright eyes of blue,
 ’Tis glancing;
 Sometimes, like feet in slippers neat,
 Comes dancing.
 By whispers round of every sort
 I’m haunted.
 Never was mortal man, in short,
 So taunted.”—THOMAS MOORE.

IN a lofty and many-coloured tent, which had been erected on a perfectly level space in the immediate vicinity of the lists, stood a knight, sheathed in complete plate. “Ho, Meehul, unrivet these accursed canisters, thou that knowest the craft of them. That a brave man should ever hoop himself in these crab-shells of cowardice! Give me instead a naked glaive and my *lene*.”

“A brave heart,” observed the *3olla-ajum*, “is the best plate armour.”

“It is alike cumbersome,” continued the gilly, “and a great hinderance.”

“Light and easy armour be the best and most convenient, such as brigandines and shirts of mail,” remarked the *blacan*, another attendant on O’Farrell.

“Yes; where the fight and trial be in narrow and rocky places, in bogs or woods, light armour will best serve,” said the chief.

“True for your honour. Men who are nimble, and

quick of body, and light of foot, who seek byways, straits, and bogs, what do they want with almaine rivets?"

"Heavy harness be fit only for France. The soil and country of France is plain, open, and champagne. But Ireland is rocky, rough, and full of hills and bogs, where heavy harness is an impediment."

"Besides, being once on foot, no man can serve in almaine rivets by reason of his armour; and as saddles be so great and deep, one cannot with ease leap up and down in complete harness."

The knight proceeded, when his harness was unlaced—the pectoral separated from the breast, the cuisses from the thighs, the ailettes from the shoulders, the gorget from the throat, and the scaly gauntlets from the hands—to array himself in what the palesmen contemptuously termed "Irish rags;" in other words, he superinduced upon his person a shirt of dark-gray linen, ample and voluminous, beautifully variegated with "red gold." He next put on an easy and elegant *Ionar*, a garment resembling a pelisse, rich with girdle and buttons, and hemmed with gold. This garment, which sheathed his person so as to exhibit its symmetry, extended from the nape of his neck to the knee.* Pendant at his side he placed a sword, blue in the blade, keen in the edge, and brilliant in the handle. Then, sitting down, the moody chief, leaning on his hand, resigned himself to reverie. His bard, whose life was concentrated in *his*, and who watched the variations of his face, as David watched those of Saul, sought to dispel his gloom by the gentle tones of his eloquent instrument. Loving poetry, as O'Farrell did in a passionate manner, he necessarily had a heart tender and generous, glowing with the joys and saddening with the calamities of others—even of imaginary personages—a mind large enough to comprehend the greatest thoughts, and delicate enough to appreciate the most beautiful ideas. He was capable of entering into all those subtle graces and all that divine elegance, the enjoyment of which the soul may experience, but words cannot express.

"Was ever man so befooled!" he said. "I scorn my-

* See Battle of Magh Leana, page 112.

self for my fatuity, as if there were no bright eyes in fair Annalee! And now she refuses to see me! Was ever such vexatious caprice? I, who screw'd myself into these vile canisters of cowardice!" And so saying, he rose and kicked his sounding cuirass, and cuisses, and vambraces, to the extremity of the apartment, with fierce kicks, that made them ring along the floor; and then sitting down—

"Sing to me; but not of love, good Fuvróac," said the chief,—“console me.”

"The Dugals are all treacherous, a hierna," replied the old man, as he arranged his angular harp. "Evil threatens my master: I know by my dreams. Many a noble Gael have they beguiled, and buried in their dismal dungeons. With wine they have beguiled some, and some with women. Do not let a cloud darken thy fair brow, *a lanna ma chree*: would that my old life could save thine. A hierna, I saw a fine hound in my dream."

"Let us have thy music, not thy dream."

"Oh, blessings on the meadows of O'Farrell the free,
And the streams and the mountains of fair Annely;
Where the warblings of birds swell so sweet from each vale,
Like some harp stringed with gold, memorizing the Gael."

The chief made a gesture of impatience,—his heart was not in Longford. The old bard tuned his instrument to a note of war.

"A mound that's made of massive stone
Stands on Ulla's plain alone;
Silent and alone it rears
Its form above the plain of spears.
Shouldst thou ask me why this stone
By a monarch's name is known?
Let me tell thee how they came
To give this mound a kingly name.
Fu3h4j7ó m4l*, who heap'd the slain
In thousands on the battle plain;
Fu3h4j7ó m4l, he and his band
Were banish'd from their fatherland.
In seven ships, those warriors bore
From Eire fair to Alba's shore.
He, the monarch, with the spear,

* Pronounced *Looea mau*.

He, the king whom kings revere,
 He, the *Ṭaoyrēac*,* rode the wave,
 His good ships crowded with the brave.
 'Exiles, shout ! till sea and sky
 Give us back our battle-cry ;
 Shout for him, till sea and shore
 Echo *luḡayrō mál nō mōr.*
 Ages distant yet shall hear
 Of this monarch of the spear ;
 And his ships that stemm'd the wave,
 Freight with the Irish brave.
Luḡayrō mál, the great and free,
 King of ships, of men, and sea,
 By many a battle spreads his reign,
 From the Orkney Isles to Spain.
 Can the powers of man essay
 To arrest great Looy's way ?
 No ! 'tis not in man or heaven
 To withstand his legions seven !

" Having conquer'd far and near,
 He whose sceptre was the spear,
 With fluttering sail, and banners spread,
 To Eire back the victor sped.
 On Ulla's plain the conqueror stood,
 Ankle-deep in human blood ;
 He the mighty, he the grand,
 Wants a spot whereon to stand.
 Every spearman took a stone,
 To raise aloft a battle-throne ;
 To build a cairn, white and grand,
 For this victor-king to stand.
 There he stood the fight to see,—
 There he reap'd the victory.

" Hence this massive mound of stone
 By a monarch's name is known ;
 Hence the fabric, high and hoar,
 Bears the name of *Luḡhoyrō mōr.*"

At this moment a *Feayrbōya*, or archer, entered the presence of O'Farrell. This man had a long cane-coloured beard, and a peculiar dare-devil look. He carried a loaded quiver, and his shield, six feet in length, was slung behind him, its convexity blazoned with his master's device. In fight it covered the warrior from head to foot. A letter, tied with a silken braid, was presented, with a low obeisance, to Donald O'Farrell, by this long-shielded archer. O'Farrell

* *Ṭaoyrēac*, pronounced *theesha* ; *mál*, a king.

opened it, and read the following words :—"For God's sake, mine own lord, draw unto Drimhna Castle, for there are you beloved; and ever when you may, and as you list, you may come to me, and at all times, early and late, I will be at your command, to live as poor a life as ever did lady. Thine own, MAUDE."

Ere the chief, O'Farrell, had well raised his eyes from this letter, the Lord Brehon of his tribe, followed by the standard-bearer and marshal, stood before him. After some words—

"Was it," asked the Lord Brehon, with a grave voice, "to woo a wanton you brought the hoary elders, the 31114341ch of our clan, into this den of swine?"

The young chief's face mantled with the crimson of indignation, blended with the fire of shame, as he observed, in a low, tremulous tone—

"If it be a crime to woo purity and loveliness, a virgin worthy of a king, in that case I break my wand of dignity. Let me sink into the plebeian's rank. Let me be a swineherd, if you will,—anything save the victim of this intolerable tyranny, that enslaves and thwarts me under the guise of dignity."

"This tone becomes you not, sir," said the Brehon—"this tone to me—"

"I'll break my wand of chieftaincy," interrupted O'Farrell. "Woe worth the day you placed it in my hands. Gather up the fragments, give them to whom you will; better be a hind, and till the glebe, than chief of this turbulent people."

"Is this, sir, your respect for your *urriaghs*,—individually your equals, collectively your superiors,—who *kinged* you honourably on the green hill's side? Have you forgotten your solemn oath? To feed your childish vanity, as well as to gratify your misplaced affection, you have conformed to foreign customs, mingled with sordid men,—men who know not their own fathers. Was it, sir, for this—to expose us to such indignity—you dared to bring us here?" Then he added, after a pause, speaking slowly and distinctly,—*"Unhappy young man, you are not an O'Farrell."* "When, my Lord Brehon, when was there a chief in Annaley who made the O'Farrells more formidable, who made their

hereditary foes more tame? Where is the chief in Innis Banba * who has covered the earth with more carcasses,—who has more frequently flushed the midnight sky with the crimson blaze of heroic war? When were the brows of the O'Farrells bound with laurels of brighter hue? You seem to think that my valour may go to sleep in the arms of my love. Show me the foe before whom I shall quail! My Lord Brehon, I am not accustomed to boast—you know I am not; but I must say, that I have seldom allowed the enemies of the O'Farrells to enjoy repose. Annalee confided her destinies to me—have they suffered in my hands? They kinged me on the rock of my ancestors—have I not repaid them? Have I not led them to victories which must be remembered to the end of time?"

"Your people have the first claim on you," said the Brehon. "You were theirs before you were hers. When the wand of authority was placed in your hand, on the hillock of the kings, you were deprived of the power of indulging your fatuous inclinations. You belong to your country, and have no right to yield to fancy."

"If you choose, sir, I shall die, but never abandon my mistress. The hands which deprive me of her should then dig me a grave."

"Forgetful of the heroic men from whom you derive your birth, you basely love the enemy of your race—a crime against your kinsmen for which you deserve to perish."

"Sir, I love my clansmen, but I also love my mistress. You know I was fostered by this girl's father. We were reared together. During whole years I was never an entire hour out of her society. We ate, drank, and studied together. We read the same book, played on the same harp, sang the same songs, repeated the same prayers. I called her sister—she called me brother. She was the light of the house—the admiration of all hearts! her breath was perfume—her voice was music. How could I fail to love her? It was not in the power of man to escape her fascination! Was it not the will of heaven, or the ordinance of inexorable destiny? Our ages were nearly the same; and there was a divine harmony in our disposi-

* *Innis Banba*, Ireland.

tions that made it painful to us to live apart. I one day said to her, 'I wish we were not brother and sister.' 'Why?' said she, looking at me with a freshness of surprise that made her innocent beauty perfectly fascinating. 'I think we should love one another more ardently if we were not related,' said I.

"Is it not better that we should be brother and sister,' said the innocent girl, 'for in that case we can always live together until we are old, old people, you know?'

"Have you any certainty that we are brother and sister,' said I.

"No,' she replied, 'except that every one calls us so. What other could I have? You know we *are* sister and brother.'

"This conversation took place in an orchard near her father's castle. While it was going on, her hands were busy in weaving a *caplet*, or chaplet of flowers. I took it from her, and placed it on her head.

"I wish you were Queen of Ireland,' said I. 'If I were Queen of Ireland,' said the dear girl, 'you should lose nothing by my dignity.'

"We led this life of enchantment until the fatal time came when the truth was told me, and we were separated. I do not know what she may have felt, but I was rendered happy for a time. Ultimately the pure, innocent love which had so long united us, disappeared, and an insane passion took its place, which, I fear, will prove my destruction."

CHAPTER XVIII.

"Marvelled the duchess how so well
His legendary song could tell
Of ancient deeds so long forgot—
Of feuds, whose memory was not;
Of forests, now laid waste and bare;
Of towns, which harbour now the hare;
Of manners, long since changed and gone;
Of chiefs, who, under their gray stone,
So long had slept, that fickle Fame
Had blotted from her roll their name."—SCOTT.

SCARCE had the Brehon left the tent—indeed, he was still

speaking—when a flourish of trumpets and the tramp of two hundred horsemen proclaimed the approach of a visitor; an uarul entered, to announce the Earl of Kildare. This earl, by the way, was now a loyalist, devoted to the interests of England, though a few years previously he had been an open outlaw. We are told that in the Monastery of St. Thomas, near Dublin, some time previously, the earl was shriven, and assoiled in the king's chamber. Before the "Agnus Dei" of the mass, which followed his absolution, the Host was divided into three parts. The priest turned to the congregation, and held the patten in his hand, on which the three parts of the Host lay. Placing his right hand over these, the earl made his solemn oath of allegiance to the sovereign lord King Henry VII., as did the other lords and knights around him, so that, to the great disgust of the Irish, he was now a loyalist.

To return: a few moments after the departure of the Brehon, the noble earl was ushered into O'Farrell's pavilion, with all the stateliness of ceremony befitting his high rank. After ordinary greetings, and partaking of some rich Malvoisie, borne by the *sjolla copan*—"My lord," said the earl, "sith the time I bare arms, saw I never knight do so marvellous deeds of arms as thou didst in our poor tournament. Know you well," continued the earl, "that we be right glad that we have found your great prowess; and we be of a fellowship that would be right glad of your company, for ye be the best lance of the world, and the one which the noble fellowship of the Pale desireth most to have in their company."

"God thank them for their goodness, but I feel well I am unable to be of their fellowship, for I was never of such deeds of worthiness for to be of the company of such a fellowship."

"Say not so, a *Hierna*; ye are the man of most prowess in Ireland; full hard, I saw you, as you smote Sir Risteard upon his helm thrice, that you abashed his helm with your stroke. By my hand, you are one of the noblest lances that ever I saw, and the courtliest of knights in his fighting."

"I would not," was the reply, "for all the lands my

father left me, have hurt Sir Risteard. But when two noble men encounter, needs must the one have the worst, like as God will suffer at the time."

After conversing on several subjects, at length the earl came to business—the object of his visit.

"The king, I grieve to say it, is of late greatly displeased — to learn —."

"The king of England?" queried O'Farrell.

"Yes," replied the earl.

"To learn what?" asked O'Farrell, in a cold and altered tone.

"That your lordship lately marched to a great town in the land of peace, the very same day being the patron day of the town,"—O'Farrell smiled grimly,—“commonly called the Church holiday.”

"Proceed, my lord." The earl seemed a little disconcerted. "Pray proceed;" and O'Farrell smiled ironically. "When every man was in his bed, you, my lord, in the dead of night, came with all your company, who, like unto a sort of furies new come out of hell, carried upon their poles flakes of fire; and did set, as they went, the low thatched houses on fire; and so, in a thrice and a moment, the whole town was flaming. The king hath been advised—."

"The king again!" exclaimed O'Farrell, interrupting him. "What hath the king to do with Longford, my lord? Longford is mine—not the king's." "Pardon me, my lord. But thy title?" queried the earl in a soothing tone.

"This is my title," and he touched his sword. "If you know a better, I shall seek to procure one. Should the king of England call in question O'Farrell's right to the lands of Annaley, this is O'Farrell's answer—it is stronger than parchment. As to the rest, let him know that the Lords of Longford obey to no other temporal person, but only to him that is strong. Donald O'Farrell is chief captain in his territory. He maketh and shall make peace and war for himself. He holdeth his realm by the sword. He hath imperial jurisdiction within that realm, and obeyeth to no other person—English or Irish—except only to such person as may subdue him by the sword."

"Nay, my lord, you take it too gravely," said the earl. "I did but jest, my lord. But of a surety your highness would not lessen your title, an' you received the king's sheriff into Annaley."

"My lord, the king's sheriff is welcome to Longford, and all his kin along with him. Heartily welcome; let him come. The O'Farrell keeps, and always will keep, houses of hospitality for all comers, and, it is well known, never refused to receive any one. But is he a poet, my lord?"

The tone in which this question was put showed that O'Farrell was ignorant of the meaning of the word "sheriff."

"No, my lord, he is not."

"I will that ye wit the hall of O'Farrell is ever open to bards, harpers, romancers, physicians—."

"My lord, he is none of these."

"Then what is a sheriff, my lord?"

The earl explained the office and duties of a sheriff. While the earl was speaking, the whole character of O'Farrell's countenance underwent an indescribable change. To the eyes of the earl he seemed to grow hideously ugly. In reality, he was grievously mortified. He had, he thought, committed himself. He was slow to reply. At length he made an effort to swallow his vexation.

"To O'Farrell, my lord, he is still welcome. To the clansmen of Annaley—wont to be ruled by the precepts of F'elimy—he may be obnoxious. They love not Saxon law. My lord, fear me, his life will not be safe."

"I am to wit, good my lord, that you refuse the king's officer."

"The door of O'Farrell has never been closed. He shall be welcome—heartily welcome. He shall hunt the wolf and the boar in Longford. But as for the clansmen of Annaley, the O'Farrells are game for a sovereign. None but the king shall hunt them."

"The sheriff represents the king," replied the earl.

"If so, my lord, let him come; but when he comes, let me know his Eric—in case he be slain."

"His Eric?" queried the earl, in amazement.

"His Eric, my lord. The number of beeves you consider equivalent to a sheriff. We shall be ready to discharge the fine—nay, give you beeves sufficient to cover the slaying of a score sheriffs." Deeming it a hopeless task to introduce "civil conversation" among the clansmen of O'Farrell, through the humanizing instrumentality of a sheriff and his hangman, and the substitution of the gallows for the *Eric*, the earl turned the conversation on the chase. Between the city and the Dodder a "long-sided wolf" had been for some weeks past skulking. This was an inexhaustible subject. An idea was suggested to the chief by this conversation. Turning to his ʒolla-ʒu41ŋ—a page or lacquey, who always stood at his elbow—O'Farrell, in the calm tone of habitual command, uttered a few words, and almost immediately his ʒolla-ʒu41ŋ entered the pavilion (a youth with ringletting fair hair curling round his comely visage), who bore a pair of noble *falcons*, fluttering on his arm. The eyes of the earl sparkled with delight on seeing those magnificent birds—they were fit for a monarch. Perusing the face of the earl, O'Farrell asked him, as a great favour, to present those "wild dogs"* to his "noble lady." Sincerely thanking the chief, the earl secretly resolved to present them to King Henry. He, nevertheless, refused to receive them. The chief should himself present them at her castle of Maynooth to the lady of that poor dwelling. Meantime he trusted he should see O'Farrell at the wolf hunt, in which, he said, he could venture to promise him noble sport. Finally taking his leave, the earl issued proudly from the gorgeous pavilion, attended by the chief, where the Earl of Kildare's retainers—two hundred in number—shining with glistening helmets, spears, and shields—the cognizance of the earl blazoned on their breasts—were awaiting his appearance. In the open space before the pavilion, the earl and the chief embraced, kissed, and parted, with every token of love. Finally, the earl departed with his whole cavalcade—men-at-arms, habblers, archers, and billmen—rank after rank, with moustachioed and sun-browned faces. The pointed pennons of the knights

* ʒ40l, wild; ʒ0ŋ, i. e., ʒu, a hound; i. e., falcon.

bachelors streamed and fluttered over polished salets, while the square banners of the knights bannerets flickered and reeled here and there along the procession; and bands of bearded horsemen—their leader's cognizance emblazoned on their breast—appeared in complete armour, holding lances twelve feet long, *chevaux al armes hoblours et gentz à pe.*

CHAPTER XIX.

“Ye towers,
With many a foul and midnight murder fed.”—GRAY.

WE must beseech the reader to imagine a gloomy and vast hall in Dublin, invested with a funereal solemnity of appearance which chilled and repelled the contemplator. It was dimly lighted by windows like a jail's, which were furnished with horn in lieu of glass. The walls were massive and cyclopean, and covered with tapestry—carpeted, as it were, with grim embroidery. In this hall sat a number of men, whose costume and bearing indicated high rank and habits of command. They were the nobles of the Pale—the commanders of the English garrison in Ireland—men who slighted law, and refused to receive it from the lord justices, because the latter were only knights, while they were barons, lords, and earls. Accustomed to administer law in their own castles, they would fain administer it likewise in Dublin. They loved to set aside the Lord Justice, and assume his functions themselves.

The most elevated chair in this council was occupied by a man in the prime of life, with a profuse brown beard spreading over his breast. His frame was symmetrical, and his muscular limbs indicated great strength. Yet he preferred the council to the field; for, notwithstanding his immense strength, he was a poltroon at heart, and shrank from danger like a child.

“Since the memorable day, my lords,” said he, in a low, earnest tone, “when following the banner of the good

Earl Strongbow, our forefathers entered this country, which hath ever teemed with wars, they or we have been surrounded by foes the most treacherous, cruel, and blood-thirsty in the world. We have encountered perils in this land more numerous than the stars of heaven. Yes, my lords, the history of your own families be the strongest proof of this. But, I am sorry to say, the perils of the past sink into insignificance, compared to the perils which environ us at this terrible moment."

"What perils be those?" asked Lord Fingal, in amazement.

"A great conspiracy, my lords, consisting of eighty or a hundred thousand men—."

Many of the audience rose up in astonishment at these words.

"My lords, you may well be surprised; nathless, I tell you only sooth. A vast conspiracy, embracing at this moment eighty or a hundred thousand men, has been hatched among the native Irish, having our ruin for its main object."

"This is the most alarming discourse I ever heard," exclaimed Lord Avrey, whose passion for contradiction was uncontrollable. He was always stimulated by his perverse disposition to call in question the propositions of others. Even conversational success filled him with envy. The present revelation lent such importance to the chairman that it immediately awaked the jealousy of Lord Avrey. It galled him to see another in possession of the ear of the council. But he was politic enough to invest this rabid passion for contradiction with an outward semblance of plausibility and moderation, for which his order have been always renowned. His face was oval, his complexion sallow, his eyes large and lustrous, and his mouth, when he smiled, exhibited a downward curve—his lips had been apparently moulded for the expression of censure. Indignation was the passion for which they were formed, and an attempt to express pleasure dragged them out of shape, as if a smile were turned upside down. "You must remember," continued Lord Avrey, "that there be scurvy varlets in this country, who make their profits by fooling and beguiling us with false rumours of plots and

conspiracies, to give themselves importance and weight in the eyes of some who ought to be more wary. It is a wicked trade or profession, which hath always flourished like a venomous nettle in this country, and should be plucked up and done away with. How oft we have been pestered by these sorts of varlets is well known to all here. I myself have been the unwitting dupe of their devilish devices."

"I should be long sorry to distress you with this information," said the first speaker, "had I not most undeniable proofs of its truth. It is only too true, as we may all find ere long, to our cost. A vast conspiracy for our overthrow has been hatched among the mere Irish, and is now ripe for explosion. Plots for the subversion of the English power be nothing so new in Ireland, that men should marvel at it; but, to the disgrace of our blood, men of English race be privy to this, like to the Lacies in the time of Bruce. I need not tell you, that in the last conspiracy of the English of the Pale, there were many more guilty than they that found punishment. As to the native Irish, all have their ears upright, waiting when the watchword shall come that they should all arise generally into rebellion, and cast away the English subjection. What was it that cut off the whole tribe of the Barnewalls, I ask you, leaving only a single child to perpetuate the noble race? Was it not a wicked, secret, impenetrable conspiracy—not even suspected, until it broke out in blood and fire, and swept an entire clan off the face of the earth, excepting only one poor innocent, who was hidden, as some say, in his mother's womb, from the hands of the conspirators?"

"If such traitor English there be," said Lord Avrey, "who, instead of keeping out the Irish, combine with them against the king, they are more sharply to be chastised than the rude Irish, which, being very wild at the first, are now become civil; whereas these English, from civility, are grown to be wild, and mere Irish."

"Such there be, assuredly," said Lord Drimsallah, "yea, and more malicious to the English than the Irish themselves. There be great men," he continued, looking hard at Lord Avrey, "who had grants made to them at first by

the kings of England. And what do they now? Instead of defending the true lieges, they rob and spoil them. They do not only make the Irish their tenants in those lands, and thrust out the English, but also some of themselves become mere Irish, with marrying with them, and fostering with them, and combining with them, contrary to the statute."

"But why do the Irish hate and abhor all reformation and subjection to the English," resumed Lord Avrey. "Is it not by reason that being once subdued by them, they were thrust out of all their possessions. Besides, if you look closely into this matter, the people we call Irish are not Irish, but true English, in their origin. As witness the O'Byrnes, who are called by the old British word *Brin*, that is, woods: and the Cavanaghs, by the old British word *Caune*, that is, strong; and the O'Tooles are called by the word *Tol*, that is, a hill country. The Mac Mahons were anciently English—to wit, descended from the Fitz-Ursulas, which was a noble family in England. Likewise the Mac Sweenies, now in Ulster, were anciently of the Veres in England, but they themselves disguised their names."

"Ah! what has this to do with the question in hand," asked Lord Fingal, in affliction and distress. "Let us hear something of the conspiracy. What is your lordship's authority? who informed you of this combination?" he said, addressing Lord Drimsallah. "Has an affidavit been made on this head?"

"My first authority, my lords, is Thomas Neylrod, Marshal of Dublin, a true liege, and faithful. Him you will hear; and he will satisfy you that our safety is undermined by a widespread and murderous conspiracy. Call in Thomas Neylrod."

Here a small man, with a resolute countenance, in the half-military garb of the city marshal, entered the chamber, in which sat the barons of the Pale.

"Will you, Thomas Neylrod, of your courtesy, repeat to this council the information which you gave me this day."

"With all my heart, my lord," said the marshal. "On the night the Dollaher took sanctuary in the church of

the Holy Trinity, a servitor of mine, named Martin de Laush, was thrown down by the crowd, and trampled on by the horses of the Templars. They broke his ribs, and otherwise hurted him well-nigh to death. He was carried, pale and bleeding, to my house. He told me, and affirmed his tale by an affidavit, which I placed in your lordship's hands, that he drank blood."

"What do you mean by drinking blood?" queried one of the barons.

"When the mere Irish," replied Neylrod, "would bind any solemn vow or combination among them, they used to drink a horn of blood together, vowing thereby to spend their last blood in that quarrel. Martin de Laush drank blood, as he swore to me."

"What did he vow in drinking blood?"

"To subvert the right and title of the king's grace—the lord of Ireland,—and to set up an Irish king to rule over Ireland. The head or chief in this conspiracy be O'Farrell, chief of Annaley. A crowd of underlings, such as his brehon and bard, in like manner take part in it."

Here the affidavit of Martin de Laush was read. It corroborated the statement of the city marshal.

"These proofs," said Lord Avery, "be little better than hearsay,—the principal witness being not forthcoming."

"My lords," said Drimsallah, "we stand on the selvage of destruction. The Irish, I tell you, are silently prepared in every part of the country, but particularly about Dublin. All is ready. They will rise like one man on the third day of the tournament, and murder us all!"

"We should seize upon O'Farrell at once," said the Lord Justice. "In his tent, I doubt not there be proofs enow to confirm, beyond all doubt, the statements of Martin de Laush."

"That would be too bold a step, while the mere Irish be so numerous about our city, and even within it," said Lord Gormanstown; "besides, O'Farrell is already entrapped in a net stronger than any we could weave for him."

"What is that?" asked the Lord Justice.

"He is in love. A young damoisel hath beguiled him from his wicked fealty to his traitor friends, and will make

him serviceable to the true liegemen. He is paralyzed by her fascinations. When this Samson is lulled in the arms of this Delilah, the head is lopped off the conspiracy, and we need not fear it."

"The lady should be instructed to that effect."

"No," said the other, slowly prolonging the sound of *o*. "Better not—let her alone; she might provoke suspicion, if acting on our instructions. She loves her own people, and must work upon him unconsciously for our safety. A conspirator in love is not to be feared. But go on, marshal."

"M'Comas's band," said the marshal, "is encamped between Dublin and the mountains. That band, in combination with O'Farrell's clansmen, helped by a rabble rout of conspirators, will overpower the faithful liegemen. Nor they alone; there be men among the Earl of Ormond's retainers, and the other three earls' retainers, who are deep in this conspiracy. There is not a baron in the Pale whose followers and henchmen are not more or less tainted with this infection."

"Now, my lords," said Drimsallah, "we have made some arrests; we have put three prisoners to the torture, and from their agonies we have wrung avowals which mainly tally with all your lordships have just heard."

"It is most unchristian conduct to put men, who may be quite ignorant, to the torture, and thus cripple them for life," said Lord Avery.

"My lords, we are, or ought to be, born enemies of the mere Irish," said Drimsallah, "we got our lands by crushing and killing them. It is only by killing and crushing them that we can keep our estates. Their misfortune is our prosperity; their success is our destruction. We must break up their combinations first, and slay them afterwards. Strongbow was the Joshua of Ireland; we are the children of his soldiers. We were sent into this land by his grace the king to root out the mere Irish,—the chiefs first, their vassals in time. If we spare them, they will not spare us; either must be swept away!"

"Good God! what are we to do?" exclaimed several with one voice.

"A base mind magnifies a trifling danger into a great calamity. It becomes and behoves us to be fearless—to

confront peril with a serene face. We must suppress the tournament, and disperse the mere Irish. Keep our retainers together, armed with bill, bow, and brand; put away dissension, and offer an unbroken front to the rebels."

"Yes! yes!" exclaimed several at once.

"No! no!" exclaimed as many more, "the tournament must not be interrupted."

"This is no time for play, when the wolfish enemy is springing at our throats."

Drimisallah rose again. "My lords, hear me. There is nothing I fear so much as an appearance of fear. If we seem afraid, we encourage attack. If *we* keep up a bold front, *their* hearts will quail; therefore, the tournament must go on. We must hide our fears—seem to know nothing. We must watch them with a hundred eyes—seize them with a thousand hands. There is only one rule in danger—face it fearlessly. We must not allow this conspiracy to explode. We must make it abortive by an immediate and premature explosion, before the mere Irish come flocking in from the country in irresistible numbers."

The majority of the council finally approved of the advice of the last speaker; and measures were immediately concerted to have that advice promptly and vigorously executed.

CHAPTER XX.

"Indem sie einst so sprachen, standen sie
In einer einsamen rotunde still
Wo ein verschleiert bild von riesengrösse
Dem jungling in die augen fiel. Verwundert
Blickt er den führer an und spricht: 'was ist's
Das hinter diesem schleier sich verbirgt!'
'Die Wahrheit' ist die antwort."—SCHILLER.

"Ibericis peruste funibus latus,
Et crura dura compe."—HORACE.

I AM now about to relate the startling events which took place when the Dollaher was dragged sprawlingly into the august presence of the council; and I know that many of

my readers will disbelieve my tale. The minds of the reading public are, unfortunately, perverted by the fatal incredulity which characterizes the present times, owing to the incessant "war on the supernatural," which literary men have waged, untiringly, during the last three hundred years. Nevertheless, undeterred by the mocking smile of self-satisfied scepticism, I shall narrate the events as they occurred. Yes, unmoved by sneering derision, I shall relate "a plain unvarnished tale."

When the Dollaher was haled in with savage roaring, which had been heard long before he appeared—when the massive door was dashed open, and his hoarse and horrible expostulations rent the ears of the assembly—after a short, fierce, noisy struggle—he was flung, by the main strength of the ruffian archers, on the boarded floor, with a bound which reverberated dully through the hall. The howl which followed his fall was scarcely uttered—he was scarcely pinned to the earth—when four other archers, slowly bearing a ponderous block of granite, entered the room with difficulty, and let the block down, after much striving and straining, against the wall. At the same time, two additional archers carried in an oaken door, which had been torn from its hinges, and placed the oaken door beside the granite block. The next moment both were standing side by side against the wall. The Dollaher looked at the door and the block with an indescribable expression.

"Who is this prisoner? What is his name?"

"Owen Sullivan, commonly called the Dollaher," replied one of the archers.

"Who is his lord?"

"The Knight of Kerry."

"Will you, Owen Sullivan," asked Lord Drimsallah, "tell this council what you know of the wicked and treasonable conspiracy which has been lately hatched in this island for the overthrow of the king's power, style, and title, in this his lordship of Ireland?"

"All I know I'll tell you, then."

"You shall receive two hundred gold nobles, if your information be valuable."

"Oh! to the devil pitch the nobles; it's little I care

for them. If your lordship never gave me a *bonn*,* I'd tell all I know, because I am a loyal man, and a true Catholic. By the cross that's kept in Eliogurty, I'll tell you all I know."

"Well, what do you know?"

"Nothing at all, then."

"Do you refuse to give information?"

"Can I give what I have not? Can I? Do you think they'd let me into their conspiracy, whoever they be—a poor, half-witted creature like me. I don't believe there is any conspiracy, though there must be, sure, when your honour says it. It's your honour's word I have for it."

"Has not this man already given information?"

"He has, my lord."

"And he now refuses?"

"He refuses now, my lord."

"Read the affidavit," said the Lord Justice.

When the affidavit was read, the Lord Justice rose to explain: "Last night, about the ninth bell, Owen Sullivan, the present witness, was admitted into my presence; but he came staggering in so brutally drunk—his language was so broken, wild, scatterbrained, and incoherent—that I heard him with disgust. 'Give me a bed,' said he. 'Let me sleep myself sober, and I'll tell you everything. There is a prodigious conspiracy on the anvil; you'll be all murdered! Have you a bed in the house where I could sleep for an hour? M'Comas's gallowglasses made me so plaguy drunk, I can neither stand, sit, nor go. Let me get a sleep. I climbed over a wall and two palings, to get to you, my Lord Justice. I'm a loyal man, and a true Catholic.' I prepared an affidavit, and he swore it. Then I gave him a bed, and appointed a guard to watch him; and while he was snoring away the fumes of his liquor, I repaired to the house of a brother justice. We formed a privy council with great difficulty, and remained all night in unutterable anxiety, consulting and debating as to what was best to be done. We increased the guards in the castle, on the walls, towers, and gates, and apprehended three ringleaders, whom we have in this house. At five

* A small coin.

of the bell this morning, Owen Sullivan was led into our presence, perfectly sober. In this state, he denied all knowledge of the conspiracy, and he still persists in denying all knowledge of it. We must compel him, by torture, to confess the truth. Archers," continued the justice, "place the witness on the floor, and lay the rock on his person."

On hearing these words, the Dollaher, in a state of desperation, threw himself on the floor (from which he had partially risen), rolled over and over, and howled in a horrible manner, clamouring for mercy. At that moment, to the terror of all present, a voice was heard issuing from the stone. It asked, in an audible and angry manner, "Do you want to crush the life out of the man, ye cruel wretches?" The archers fell back in horror from this speaking rock, on which they gaped in pale and speechless awe. "Let the poor creature alone," repeated the rock; "he knows nothing, and can tell nothing." This supernatural incident produced the utmost disorder in the council. It appalled every man of them. It could be nothing else, they felt convinced, but the voice of an evil spirit, which dwelt in the rock, and interested itself for the Dollaher. As to the archers, were the rock a glowing mass of red-hot iron, they could not be more reluctant to touch it. Nor they alone! the greatest horror—the greatest consternation—seemed to take possession of every man in the chamber. They were scared and heart-struck by this phenomenon, and appeared like people bewitched. Trouble and alarm were visible in every countenance; and the council, finding deliberation impossible, broke up in a state of distraction which cannot be described.

"Remove the prisoner; this is plainly a case for the church," said the Lord Justice, with a cry in which the quaver of terror was perfectly audible. "Before we proceed further, an exorcism will be requisite in this case. We shall lock this chamber until some reverend fathers read a solemn exorcism here."

The Dollaher was removed and lodged in his dungeon, from which he did not fail to get out shortly after. But this affair had the effect of causing his expulsion from the confederacy of which he was a member.

CHAPTER XXI.

"Then sounds the trumpet clearly, then clangs the loud tambour--
'Make room, make room for Gazul! throw wide, throw wide the door!
Blow, blow the trumpet clearer still—more loudly strike the drum!
The Alcaydè of Algava, to fight the bull, doth come.'

"And first before the king he passed, with reverence stooping low,
And next he bowed him to the Queen, and Infantas all a-row;
Then to his lady's grace he turned, and she to him did throw
A scarf from out her balcony, was whiter than the snow."

LOCKHART'S *Ancient Spanish Ballads*.

If the reader will imagine a vast plain, mantled with fair grass and dotted with noble trees, sloping on the one side to the modest Liffey, and extending on the other apparently to the azure mountains of Wicklow, he will have some conception of the "green of the virgins" on the great day of the tournament. Instead of Grafton Street, Nassau Street, College Green, and Brunswick Street—which were not in existence—a prodigious wooden paling, a great wall of egg-shaped palisades, extends for a quarter of a mile in the direction of the mountains, and incloses the great "lists." It is full of life. That extremity of the wooden paling, which is situated nearest to the bannered city of the swords, presented the appearance of a portal or gate, such as admits you to a castle of great magnitude, like that of King John at Trim. Two mounted warriors could enter this portal side by side. The other extremity of the lists (echoing for ever to the trumpet), which lay next the mountains, opened likewise with a portal, at which two mounted knights riding abreast could easily enter. At either extremity of the oval palisading there was a guard of gallowglasses; their shining axes polished to the brilliancy of silver—their reticulated hauberks and lofty helmets flashing in at every motion in the sun: lusty fellows—proud and choleric—of mighty bodies, and with great beards. They maintained order in a most peremptory manner, by depriving those "mere Irish," who disturbed it, of their heads, or at least threatening in a choleric voice so to do. Adjacent to these was a huddle of armourers,

farriers, and smiths, hammer in hand, with smitted faces and leathern aprons. In addition to whom, you might likewise see a band of heralds, trumpeters, and pursuivants in brilliant tabards and fantastic costumes, glittering inside the lists, haughty as peacocks, and almost as gorgeous.

On that portion of the suburbs now termed William Street, a line of splendid pavilions rose, topped with white and green pennons fluttering above them—"lofty, many-coloured banners," as an Irish poet terms them. These were the chosen ensigns of the knightly men who presented themselves as challengers at this great tourney, "not one of whom would give way the space of an inch backwards." Before each pavilion hung a glittering shield, one of which was "a choice wreathed golden-bordered shield," while another, which hung before a second portal, or pavilion, was "a beautifully streaked, truly firm, chainful shield," &c. An *Jap-tyolla*, or squire, stood beside each shield—a fantastic-looking fellow—clothed, in one instance, in a complete suit of green-shining armour, which encased his face and shone like metal, though composed merely of twisted rushes, skilfully plaited, so as to resemble plate.

From the limb of a giant oak hung a gorgeous tablet, glowing with heraldic blazonry, fantastic devices, and with knightly names (written in letters of gold on a white ground) of barons and knights, who engaged to run at the tilt against all comers—such as "Sir John Grace of the iron belt," a stalwart knight from Kilkenny; Sir Gerald Fitzgerald, surnamed *Murchoh*, or the cavalier; *Sir Risturd an Earan*, or the iron knight; Sir Christopher St. Lawrence, or the fair knight; and *Sir Redmond na Squab*, or the destroying knight; Sir Ian O'Kinsella, or the knight aspersed with blood.

This great plain of the Steyn was elsewhere covered with barbed chargers, gay squires, dancing plumes, and flashing lances—tents, banners, and noisy retainers—gay with silken scarfs and rich brocade. The mechanics and plebeians, casting their caps towards the welkin, shouted for joy at the superb appearance of the green, which they themselves had laboured for weeks previously to cover in and set off.

The Earl of Kildare, mantled in purple cloth of gold, was seated on a rich throne under a magnificent canopy at

the nearer end of the lists, with ladies, nobles, and chiefs at his right and left, while underneath were the knights, squires, and archers of his train. The lord mayor of Dublin then appeared—bowing as he passed, and followed by the mace-bearer—lowering his sign of authority. These officials, with the marshal of Ireland, were advancing in procession to the farther end of the lists, where scaffolds of similar form, but inferior magnificence, were erected for their reception. The guards of the lists rode in on horseback, and received their charge from the marshal of the city, and the constable of Ireland, who were stationed beneath the throne. Internal to the lists, the bards of the barons, chieftains, and knights of the Pale, formed a great circle round the lists. The tournament was opened with a chorus of these bards; and while the knights sat their plumed chargers like iron statues, the bards sang the loveliness of the female sovereign of the lists—the *Reine d'Amour*—to the symphony of a hundred harps. “The pine of Slieve Eahy,” they said, “was less majestic than her form; there was more lustre in her countenance than in the radiant star of evening skies—pure, large, and bright. Never was the *luachra* of the Boyne so graceful, as the ‘Light of Beauty’—the tint of the blossom of *Lusgorman* was seen in her sparkling eyes, and the glow of the holly-berry in her finely chiselled lips. The purity of her pearly teeth exceeded the blossom of the sloe, while over her polished shoulders fell her luxuriant locks in a shower of shining ringlets. She was radiant as the sun, and milder than the moon.”

Though from her position as Queen of Beauty—the admiration of the men! the envy of the women!—Maude Barnewell might appear the happiest of mortals, she was by no means so in reality. She had a serene countenance, but a sad heart. At her feet sat her maiden aunt, concealed from the crowd, and keeping strict watch on every glance and gesture of the Queen of Beauty. By advice, criticism, and censure sheathed in smiles, she made her young ward unhappy in the midst of splendour. Maude’s passion for a mere Irishman, which the old lady had divined, was a great crime in the eyes of the latter. The temper of the good old lady was soured, not only by this unfortunate penchant—she was displeased with Maude for

another reason, which she would not avow, even to herself—she hated her for her loveliness and the general homage she received. To gratify this spite, she called Maude “a wild Irishwoman”—in heart and disposition she was Irish—a traitress to “his grace” the Lord of Ireland, Henry VII. Maude did not deny this. She often said, “Since my lover is an Irishman, I am an Irishwoman. My love coerces me to embrace the interests of that people.”

“My dear, that is a scandalous avowal. I am shocked at you, my love. The native Irish are the direst enemies of your father’s house. They nearly exterminated the whole family on one occasion. Your father, my love, is a Palesman; you should likewise be a partizan of the Pale.”

“It is true,” said the Queen of Beauty, “my blood is in one camp, but my heart is in the other. I am doomed to suffer, whichever party falls. If the Palesmen complain, as you say, that I am sacrificing their interests in loving O’Farrell, let them find enemies whom I can hate.”

“You should renounce O’Farrell,” persisted the old lady; “you should select a lover from your own race. Then your heart would not be rent and agitated by conflicting emotions. Whatever befell, the misfortunes of the Irish would not involve you in disaster.”

“You urge me to the commission of a crime,” said the Queen of Beauty.

“A change which reason sanctions cannot be deemed a crime, my love,” said the old lady.

“To violate a vow is an unpardonable crime,” answered the Queen of Beauty.

Meantime the noble knights of Lagenia had splintered several lances, and run many a noble course, amid the cries of the rude and joyous populace, when the trumpet sounded, and an unknown horseman rode towards the lists. His barred visor was down and his beaver up; from head to foot he was sheathed in complete plate, which was fluted, and polished to the highest degree of lustre—a suit that had apparently been made expressly for himself, his form being too broad and massive for that which was commonly imported from Milan.

"I require you," said the herald, "to tell me your honoured name."

"Sir, as for my name," said the unknown, "I will tell it to no knight that beareth shield."

His shield was covered with a cloth, to puzzle, not to gratify curiosity; and all the smiling beauties who witnessed the martial pageant, seated in galleries round, secretly admired his proud and stately form.*

Little more than three minutes elapsed in the silence of expectation when the lists rang, and every heart thrilled with the brazen blast of a defiant trumpet, which echoed from the opposite extremity of the arena. At this answering blazon the joyous spectators merrily cheered, knowing that the challenge of the unknown knight had met an acceptance. But all soon became anxiety amid the masses of the clamorous and perspiring populace, when the answering knight failed to appear. This delay was only momentary. In another instant the rich curtains of the pavilion of the new knight were seen separating, and young Lord Howth, "from spur to plume a star of tournament," rode forward on a magnificent courser, shining with splendid harness, and bearing a shield, which was blazoned with the sea-wolf. The shouts of the applauding multitude became loud as thunder as they contemplated the rivetted trim of this plumed combatant, whose lance, with that of his opponent, were submitted to the heralds, and pronounced *sans faute*, without blemish.

Amid the breathless silence of a thousand eyes, the combatants took their spears and places. The trumpet sounded, and, as the heralds exclaimed, "On, valiant knights! fair eyes behold you!" they dashed along the lists, and, coming like two whirlwinds, clashed together with amazing force, and a harsh fragor, which is indescribable. The spear of the unknown challenger was seen thrust through the gorgeous shield of his antagonist, as if the shield were parchment, but no blood was spilled, as the weapon passed over the shield-arm. The combatants careered their heated steeds backwards to the end of the lists, and, drawing up

* See preface to "Battle of Magh Rath," in the publications of "Irish Archæological Society."

there, as still as statues, were greeted by the acclamations of the crowd.

So masterly was the horsemanship of both the knights, and so perfectly were they accomplished in the exercises of chivalry, that, in the second course, neither suffered nor inflicted a bruise. They accordingly resumed their places, and, for the third time, couched their spears. At the third collision their fiery horses swerved a little aside, but, in the starting, the helmet of young Howth was dashed off by a side-thrust. He returned bareheaded to his attendants, and a new helmet was busily and hurriedly placed upon his head, and rivetted upon his neck. Again they were mounted, and mutually took their lances and ran another tilt. They met with their spears in the middle of their shields. The force of the shock nearly swept both from their horses, and would have hurled them to the earth, but by gripping their steeds with all the strength of their legs, they clung to their saddles, and saved themselves from falling. They then returned to their places, heated by their exertion, and took breath. The new knight, young Lord Howth, who was desirous of signalizing his intrepidity on this particular occasion, took his spear again, and spurred his horse across the arena. The unknown knight in an instant dashed forth to meet him. Each struck the other with such force that the fire flew out of their armour. With that collision the young Lord Howth was hurled over his horse's tail prostrate on the plain, while the heated stranger came back again to his place. This unknown knight was greatly praised, and the spectators present protested that he had right well done his "devoir." Again he desired, for the love of his lady, to have another course, but he was refused; and he then mixed with the knights and spectators, whose gossip knew no end. Meantime, the fallen cavalier was borne from the lists; his helmet was unlaced, his cuirass removed, and his glossy tresses were seen curling over his bare neck, and finely-formed shoulders. The edge of an earthen vase of cold water was put to his finely-formed lips by a mailed and brawny axeman, at the taste of which he uttered a sigh, and the bruised knight returned slowly *to consciousness.*

CHAPTER XXII.

"Can you name her now so lightly,
Once the idol of you all?
When a star has shone so brightly,
Can you glory in its fall?"—*Anonymous.*

THE proceedings in the lists were, as we said, the subject of universal comment among the crowded populace. Nothing could equal the eagerness with which they discussed every object and incident connected with the tournament,—the helmets, lances, and hauberks—the crests on the shields, and the symmetry of the horses—the beauty of the ladies, and the courage of the knights—the character, history, and ancestry of their feudal masters—all, and much more, were canvassed with an ardour, warmth, and passion, of which the people alone are capable. With the view of gleanings a few of their wise comments, we shall descend into a fervid group of eager gossipers, and listen to, and record, remarks which must otherwise subside into oblivion, and be lost to posterity.

"Much I marvel whom he can be," observed one of the gossipers, alluding to the strange knight.

"A question I was asked a hundred times to-day. Some say this—some say that; there be no knowing."

"Be he whom he will, right marvellous he did his devoir."

"By St. George and he did! right marvellous."

"Some whisper," observed another in a low tone, "he be an elfin knight,—the unhallowed love of Maude Barnewell."

"Well! well!" exclaimed several simultaneously, eager for intelligence which held out the promise of blending mystery with scandal.

"She be a marvellous damsel," continued the former speaker in a low tone, "too wise and too handsome for a Christian damsel. They say she hath a sparrow, which telleth her all news, and fieth to all lands; for she right wise understandeth the language of birds."

"She doth?" exclaimed the auditors of this strange tale.

"Yes! and, moreover, she wandereth in woods where she doth meet this elfin knight; and whenever she be at joust or tourney, thither cometh her goblin knight, and doth her Christian admirers to the death."

"'Tis very marvellous, by'r lady."

"Yes; all who woo her perish by the elfin knight. He haunteth her wherever she be. He wonneth in the hills, but cometh ever pricking forth to lists like these, to couch lance before the face of ladies and of barons."

"I'll tell you what, good Christians," observed an old fellow with sharkish teeth and one eye, who had been hitherto silent, "as sure as I am a living man, many a witch was burned in Hoggen Green that less merited the flames and fagots than the same Maude Barnewell, 'Queen of Beauty,' as she's called. She's not *right*;" and he shook his head.

"Is it, and she so graceful and beautiful?" asked, in a tone of admiration, a younger fellow, in a cap like that of the knave of diamonds. The speaker seemed to feel horror at the thought he repudiated.

"Beautiful!" exclaimed the old fellow peevishly, "What profits her angel face if she has a devil's heart? Tell me that!" Then, turning to the rest, "Listen to me, good Christians, as sure as I am a living man," (here he dropped his voice,) "she is no better than one of the wild Irish themselves, and dealing with the wild Irish" (here he raised his tone) "is worse than dealing with the devil any day! Beautiful as she seems, she's a spider of hell!"

"Beautiful!" crowed out an oily, sallow little woman in a gray hood. "That *sort* can take any manner of face they like. She can turn herself into a cat, or change into an angel, when she chooses."

"She ought to be ducked at the very least," said a tall fellow, very deliberately.

"Don't we all know what Alice Kettle did?" resumed the old woman; "she used to fly by night through the air like a bird, and was not she burned in Kilkenny for *it*?"

"*It's all envy*," the youngster resumed; "old women's -

talk, and rank jealousy. The women hate her for her passing loveliness, and give out bad reports."

"That's it!" exclaimed a new comer; "he that will kill his neighbour's dog beareth folk in hand he is mad!"

"Oh! she's well known to colleague with the Irishry," resumed the old fellow, a little staggered by the confidence of the new comer; and, falling back upon firm ground, "she's well known to love the wild Irish—and what's the reason? Only because they're no better than black paynims. The Irishry were never known to burn a witch or a heretic for the good of their own souls, and in compliance with Scripture; they're no better than Pagan dogs."

"Oh! they're not Christians at all; every one knows that," resumed another. "I heard Father Salmon say they get wolves to stand godfathers to their children, and they baptize their infant sons in buttermilk."

Returning from this discussion, which was too valuable to be lost, and for which the reader will surely feel grateful, we shall go back to the tournament.

The stranger knight was meantime rewarded with a chaplet or crown of pearls by the fair hands of the "queen of beauty and amour," who presided over the lists, and who, when he rode over towards her seat, and dismounting, knelt before her, placed it herself, with her own beautiful hands, upon his helmet. As her eyes lighted on the bars of his helmet, while graciously performing this operation, she suddenly drew back from the glare of the eyes which flashed within the visor, and turned deadly pale, fixing her looks upon the stranger, while palsied with intense and tremulous anxiety. A word, however, was whispered from the visor, and was heard by no human ears but hers, and her alarm vanished, and was followed by joy; she blushed, smiled, and sparkled with gratified emotion, and seemed as if she could have kissed a chevalier who had so valorously acquitted himself. She saw that for her sake he had come into the field,—that for her

"He dressed
His manly limbs in mailed vest."

"I lay it on you as a 3e4r," * said Maude Barnewell, "that

* 3e4r, obligation.

you keep yourself and clansmen, during twelve months, from tilts and tournaments, from war and battle, from violence of every kind." This fatal year, which O'Farrell reluctantly obeyed, proved the ruin of Ireland.

CHAPTER XXIII.

"Never was a closer fight,
Than in Argan-Mor that night;
Oh! how little men want light,
Fighting for their lair."—DAVIS.

THE influence of the English crown had been recently re-established in Ireland. The barons and knights of the Pale, as we have already said, swore fealty to Henry VII., influenced principally by a bull which Innocent VIII. had issued in favour of the subdolous monarch of England. Ireland did not belong to the Irish, according to Innocent; it belonged to the Holy See. The pope was lord of Ireland; the king was his deputy. In resisting Henry they were resisting Innocent, and consequently were guilty of sin. Though the Palesmen, a little previously, had threatened to become Irish—were open rebels—they now endeavoured, in their new-born zeal, to convert the Irish to English manners. Hence their tilts and tournaments, which superseded the military games of the Irish,—such as hurling matches which filled the fields with clamour, and turned emulation into the collision of brawny and swarming clansmen,—as well as those equestrian games in which the Irish hurled the 34¢* at one another, as the Orientals hurl the *jerreed*. But the lords of the Pale lost popularity by these proceedings. The native Irish hated them for such attempts, and a widely ramified conspiracy was the consequence, which enlisted thousands, and, only for an accident, would have redeemed Ireland, and drowned the Knights of the Pale in their own blood.

Wars, according to English authorities, have always

* 34¢, javelin.

raged in Ireland, but never more fiercely than when reconciliation was "anvil'd" by Anglo-Irish peers and prelates.

The people of Dublin, on the present occasion, were apprised of the purposes of the native Irish,—the secret had leaked out through the drunkenness of the Dollaher. The townsmen flocked to the tournament, accordingly, in the most pacific guise, with fruits, provisions, and refreshments, and articles of merchandise; but under these—daggers, swords, bows, and javelins, were hidden,—and thus there was a conspiracy of the citizens against a conspiracy of the natives.

The encounter of the Irishman, O'Farrell, with the Englishman, Lord Howth, had been watched with profound interest and anxious excitement by the two races. Their lives seemed to hang on the event. But the passions which had been previously suppressed could no longer be restrained. The fall of Howth—the triumph of O'Farrell—produced prodigious exultation on one side, deep and sullen dissatisfaction on the other. The fury of the Palesmen at first manifested itself in verbal altercation, as to the merits of the two nations. The quarrel originated in this way. A citizen told an Irishman: "As for hardiness, I have seen by experience that in all my days I have never heard that a hundred footmen or horsemen of Irishmen could abide to fight with so many Englishmen." This was a very dangerous remark. It was immediately answered by a blow. At this blow, as at a signal, the two nations, who were partially prepared, rushed upon one another with savage fury and roars of exasperation. The seats were broken down, plucked up and torn to pieces, to furnish arms to those who were weaponless. But it is impossible to describe that terrible fight. The rage and fury of the struggle no language can do justice to. An Irish poet, who was present,—who saw the conflict with his eyes,—describes it as the most terrible he ever beheld, and he had seen many. The javelins and missiles of the English and Irish, he asserts, flew as thick as snow-flakes when "foul and fierce all winter drives along the darkened air." The fight was hand to hand, breast to breast, foot to foot, man to man. No human power, he assures us, can paint that thick and terrible collision,—the blows that were given

and received, the screams of agony, and the shouts of victory. The Irish finally drove the English knights and barons in a huddle into the city, within which they were forced to take refuge and bar out the foe.

The flight of the citizens was occasioned by Lord Drimsallah. His vainglory drove him into the melee, but ere long his panic-fears drove him out of it. Nevertheless, his appearance, as he rode into battle, was magnificent: "most like a baron bold,"—his person was so symmetrical, his armour so bright, and his charger so massive and well appointed. But, in spite of his fine person,—when the arrows began to fly, when the stones, winged by the *чпаны-тубал*,* whizzed by his ears, when the javelins skimmed his person and sung through the air, when the clamorous tumult roared round him like a maddened ocean,—his discomposed countenance turned green and white, *злау-бан*, as the Irish termed it. His heart failed him—he lost all courage—and, wheeling his steed, he fled like a hare for the city. Disheartened by his example, the great moving mass of citizens drove along with inextricable confusion, hubbub, clamour, and uproar, in the same direction. They would be safer, they thought, ensconced behind their ramparts, than in that perilous field. Horses were mixed with infantry, infantry were mixed with horses, all in the wildest disorder. The fine horse which his lordship rode was pierced by an arrow, which, going upright from an Irish hand, fell downright on the horse's neck, just behind the head, piercing the spinal marrow. Maddened with the pain, the suffering horse reared bolt upright in a state of ungovernable agony, then leaped forward, light as a deer, and fell headlong in the mire. His lordship was hurled from his saddle,—he drove along the earth to a great distance, broke his neck, and died. Then the object of the Irish was to break into the town; and here the most dreadful scenes were enacted. *Eqbeul*, the gallows-glass, was seen wielding his ponderous axe,—its blade like a shoemaker's knife,—and smashing the city gate with his mighty blows, when an immense stone, hurled from the walls, crushed his cone-shaped helmet, shattered his skull,

* A sling with a handle of wood.

and flung him on the earth, prostrate, bloody, and lifeless.

While the east side of the city was beleaguered by the conspirators, the Earl of Kildare devised a stratagem for their discomfiture. At the head of 300 Kildare men, clothed in mail shirts, and mounted on powerful horses, he flung open Ormond gate. He rode out at the head of his horsemen, and swept round the city to the ground now occupied by Grafton Street. Whirling their lances over their heads, and shouting *Crom-a-boo* at the top of their voices, the Kildare men fell upon the conspirators and drove them in a struggling mass to the walls. This cry was a signal to the citizens, who answered it with shouts of transport, unfurled their black flag, threw open their ponderous gate, and sallied out, horse and foot, in eager multitudes. The conspirators found themselves between two fires,—charged behind, charged before; while javelins from the east, javelins from the west, hurled them to the earth. They could not sustain it, they broke and fled in every direction, and the city was saved to England.

CHAPTER XXIV.

“As a young bird of Babylon,
Let loose, to tell of victory won,
Flies home with wing, ah! not unstained
By the red hands that held her chained.”—MOORE.

AT the first mutterings of the storm, before it had broken out in the savage fury I have described, the Knights of the Pale, according to pre-arrangement (for almost everything in this affray was preconcerted), hurried to the protection of the ladies, soothed their distress, and bore them in their brawny arms into the neighbouring convent of the Virgin. They did this without impediment. Such is the nature of the Irish commonalty—they are so dazzled by the splendour of aristocracy—that in their civil conflicts they always spare the lords, and strike down the plebeians. They connive at the officers, but slay the

rank and file. In the present whirlwind, this circumstance was the safety of the Knights of the Pale.

A cry from Maude Barnewell had brought O'Farrell to her feet in the first brush of the conflict. She rushed into his arms, which were extended to receive her; and for a moment he was perfectly happy. This felicity was transient, for the maiden aunt, with a scranell cry of grating selfishness and importunity, managed to spring upon his horse in some indescribable way, and perch behind him. She clung to him with the pertinacity and the squalling cry of a wild cat. She urged him, in a cracked crying voice, to hurry to the convent and deposit her in its sanctuary. O'Farrell was firmly persuaded that she was a witch. The massive *destrier* on which O'Farrell sat, seemed to participate in his master's opinion. The moment the old lady's voice rang in his ears, he flung up his head; he snorted in apparent fright; he reared, neighed, and plunged, and shook his harness in the most violent manner. He became so ungovernable, that but for the excellent horsemanship of O'Farrell, the horse would have hurled them all to the earth. After leaving the ladies in the convent, O'Farrell and his clansmen took their place on the very ground occupied three hundred years before by Gillemoholmog, and like him, looked on without participating in the fight. Such was the rigorous discipline of the clan—it was so thoroughly and promptly obedient to its lord's command; it was so essentially military—that O'Farrell found little difficulty in making his men passive or active, as he pleased. It was a regiment of which he was colonel, while his uncle was major, his cousins captains, and his more distant relations serjeants and corporals. Every man was in his proper place, and knew that place perfectly. It was not necessary to impress by threats or punishments on these gallant men the duty of regarding as their head, him whom they had regarded as their head ever since they could remember anything. Every private had, since infancy, respected his corporal much, his captain more, and almost adored his colonel. There was little danger of desertion or disobedience. When these things are fairly considered, it will not be thought strange that the native clans occasionally achieved

great martial exploits.* Indeed, so long as the clan system remained unaltered, the power of England, which overran France, could make little or no impression on Ireland—always excepting, of course, Mac Murrough's territory, which that king bequeathed to Englishmen. On the present occasion it is almost certain that if O'Farrell had sacrificed his love to his patriotism, the conspirators would have triumphed. If he had drawn his sword, and led his clan unto the fight, the city would have been captured—the English defeated. But he failed to do so. He was paralyzed by his promise, and bewitched by beauty. The lustre of Maude's eyes, the charm of her voice, the graces of her person, the brilliancy of her complexion, intoxicated him. As the poet says,—

"He preferred in his heart the least ringlet that curl'd
Down her exquisite neck, to the throne of the world."

CHAPTER XXV.

Her neck outdoes the stately swan,
Her radiant face the summer dawn;
Ah! happy thrice the youth for whom
The Fates design that branch to bloom.

"Pleasant are your words benign,
Rich those azure eyes of thine;
Ye who see my queen, beware
Those twisted links of golden hair."

SAMUEL FERGUSON.

SEATED on a "settle," in a room which overlooked the fosse of the Castle of Drimhna, and the verdant oaks beyond it, a lady—the "Light of Beauty," as the Irish called her—held in her right hand a dove, whose rustling pinions were alternately spread out and depressed, as she raised it in the air, or lowered it to her bosom. Its lustrous eyes, its glossy plumage, its tiny feet, lately washed in vinegar, the rich and silken smoothness of its varying and burnished coat, were objects of her doating contemplation.

* Macaulay.

The fine feathers on its little wing had been slightly frayed by the friction of the burden which had been imposed upon it, and this injured but active wing was the subject of her complacence and sympathy. On the "settle" lay a billet which had been wafted through the air by the winged and lustrous legate on her hand. She pressed the bird fluttering to her breast, and bestowed on it, in melodious accents, a thousand endearing epithets.

The billet was written in the small, neat, elaborate hand, known at one time throughout Europe as the Caroline character, but now better known as the Irish. Putting the bird aside, her snow-white hand unfolded the perfumed billet, which she pressed to her lips, and read for the thousandth time, and read it again; then, closing its folds, she caressed and kissed the bearer, and thus—alternately perusing the letter and fondling the pigeon, or musing in the elysium of reverie—time flew by. Evening faded and disappeared, and night came on, sprinkled and crowned with starry lights, and unrolling the sable splendour of its solemn pall; and the woods, the world, darkening before its march, were speedily clothed in the livery of the sable heavens. Our heroine agitated a small silver bell, whose sweet quick tones were re-echoed dully by the massive chamber—the mighty walls, concealed with arras, and having an enormous beam sweeping across the ceiling—faintly repeating the tingle. A withered crone appeared.

"Bring the light—quick!"

The old female paused and inquired, with the familiarity of a confidante, after shutting the door with the caution of a hag, "Is it going to read it again you are? My certy! I never saw such a lady!"

"I must read it again and again; and were I to read it a thousand times, it would not be too often. A letter like this is so dear a friend, and chats so sweetly, and in so low and kind a tone, that one is never tired of reading, and reading, and re-reading it!"

"Well, to be sure! I could understand all that, my lady, if a letter uttered a new language every time it was opened; but it is the same letter, the same words, the old story over again."

"Do not speak so disrespectfully of this letter. It speaks

the language of the heart, and that language is so profoundly full of meaning, that a few words express an endless depth of truth, for love resembles music."

"Music? And how can that be, my sweet bird?"

"An old melody is only the more welcome and pleasing because one heard it a thousand times, on the sunny hills, and by silver rivulets of one's youth. And the notes of the blackbird,—perched in its airy chamber in some bowery tree, warbling on a summer's evening, amid the foliage where its nest is concealed—is it less charming because it is the same artless melody which the innocent minstrel carolled every sunny evening of its guileless life. Never varying any more than the blackbird's song, but ever pleasing like it, my letter is charming though read a million times."

She immediately proceeded to answer this letter,—not in the ordinary manner, with pen and ink, but in a very unusual manner, with leaves and flowers. From a bundle of foliage, the lady selected a perfect leaf of the hazel tree, in conformity with a science which she had learned from her lover himself. As the name of the letter *c*, in Irish, is *coll*, and as *coll* is likewise the name of the hazel, a leaf of this shrub stands for the letter *c*. Into the leaf she introduced a silken thread, and then tied the hazel leaf to a leaf of the spindle. The name of the spindle tree, in Irish, is *oir*, and *oir* is likewise the Irish name of the letter *o*. A leaf of the hazel, and a leaf of the spindle, spell *co*. Her hand trembled as she selected a leaf of the vine,—the name of the vine, in Irish, is *muin*, and *muin* is likewise the name of the letter *m*. Finally, she selected a leaf of the aspen,—the name of the aspen, in Irish, is *eadha*, and *eadha* is likewise the name of the letter *e*.* These collective leaves spell *come*. Wrapping them carefully together in due order, she flung them out of her window, where an old man with a harp picked them up, and bore them away unopened. They constituted an eloquent reply, when unrolled by him they were intended for.

* See Higgins's *Druids*.

CHAPTER XXVI.

" Sometimes the linnet piped his song,
Sometimes the throistle whistled strong,
Sometimes the spar-hawk wheeled along—
Hush'd all the grove from fear of wrong.

By grassy capes with fuller sound
In curves the yellowing river ran,
And drooping chestnut buds began
To spread into the perfect fan
Above the teeming ground."—TENNYSON.

BENEATH the capacious branches of a gigantic oak, which canopied the group with the foliage of its overspreading limbs, and in whose sunny hollow the wild bees of the solitude had often hived a store of yellow nectar, three men might be observed loitering suspiciously. They were prowling near a slight swell where the distant waters of a modest rivulet were shining through the grass; and where a gentle breeze, now and then sweeping the forest, made it murmur in all its solemn recesses. These men were armed with bows and arrows (the latter thrust into a waist-belt), and might be easily mistaken for fowlers, were it not for a fierce and dare-devil air—a battered and dogged expression of countenance which seemed entirely at variance with the innocent sports of the field. They were lurking near a pass in the wood—a kind of bridle road, where the worn and beaten character of the verdure exhibited indications of a semi-thoroughfare. They were furnished with axes in addition to their bows, while one bore a lance. A profusion of unkempt hair fell about their bearded faces in thick and massive locks, and rendered them absolutely frightful. Their dress, which was considerably the worse for the wear, consisted of tight plaid trousers and a tunic, having an involuted decoration round the hips—not unlike the frill surrounding the neck of noblemen. They wore buskins of brown leather destitute of heels, and their tunics were buttoned up to the breast, leaving their necks bare. "How the devil," grunted one, "shall we get on?" The man *who thus spoke* had a jolter head and a meagre face. In *the region of the moral sentiments*, the head seemed parti-

cularly high, owing to the upright way in which the shock of hair stood. His cheeks were depressed and his cheek-bones high. His thin brown moustache imperfectly concealed a yellow scab which crusted his upper lip, and in which the roots of his brown beard were sparingly stuck. In walking, his feet were always parallel, because his shanks were bandy. Intended by nature for a tailor or weaver, war and arms were the master-passion of his heart. He aspired to be a general; he had degenerated into a thief. "How the devil shall we get on?" he exclaimed.

"Oh! very well with his assistance," was the response.

"No luck," he growled with a frown and an oath. "No luck."

"No," answered a fellow with one eye and sharkish teeth, "curses scald you, and scald you in hell. Your luck is like yourself, bad as the devil could make it."

"Hallo!" was the reply—a reply accompanied with a scream of harsh forced ironical laughter—"You are good, very good, to be sure, ha! ha! ha! ho! ho!"

"Better than you, by —," retorted the second, looking at him fiercely with a horrible squint, which, by the way, was imperceptible until he was irritated.

"Oh! by —," bellowed forth the third, "'tis useless quarrelling—quarrelling will never cure bad fortune."

"That's a very wise observation, Murdoch," answered the first. "We can never be too grateful for such wisdom as you, from time to time, favour us with. May the ravens in reward, as they are wise birds too, rend your hair to line their nests."

"Hush! hark!" exclaimed the third, motioning towards the wood. "Some one approaching. See, see, Menteith;" and with these words he looked earnestly in the direction of the mountains. The squabble was immediately quelled—a deep silence fell upon the group—they were all attention, and this silence was succeeded by a stealthy and simultaneous movement in the direction of recesses that abounded beside the open space.

"'Tis a prize; a strapping youth and a lady, by all the saints," said Menteith to Murdoch in a low tone. "He's well dressed! Here they come. Let us retire into the furze and shoot them from our old ambush."

"Wound him," hissed the third, "*only* wound him. He's a ransom."

"Wound the devil! No! kill him as dead as a herring;—that fellow would turn like a roaring lion on you,—I'd rather take a wolf by the ears; a wound would only sting him into fight. He has it in his looks. See his sparkling eyes. Kill him, kill him, safe and sure!"

"Hush, let us first overhear what he says."

CHAPTER XXVII.

Duke. I should like to see you in the dress I last presented you.

Julia. The blue one, Sir?

Duke. No, love, the white. Thus modestly attired,
A half-blown rose stuck in thy braided hair,
With no more diamonds than thine eyes are made of;
No deeper rubies than compose thy lips;
Nor pearls more precious than inhabit them;
With the pure red and white, which that same hand,
Which blends the rainbow, mingles in thy cheeks;
This well-proportioned form (think not I flatter),
In graceful motion to harmonious sounds,
And thy free tresses dancing in the wind,
Thou'lt fix as much observance as chaste dames
Can meet without blushing.—TOBIN'S *Honeymoon*.

THE parties who now entered the spot, which the freebooters had skulked away from, were too intently engaged in conversation to notice the retreating figures of the thieves. They consisted of a man in the flower of youth—the rich ringlets of whose nut-brown hair floated on the breeze as they escaped from the *baread* or cap, adorned with a plume, which covered his brow. His face was comely, sparkling, and martial in a high degree. His snow-white neck was bare, except where a ring of twisted gold, adorned with two tiny serpent-heads, embraced and decorated it.

A scarlet cassock, which fitted his person so accurately as to exhibit perfectly the contour of his finely-formed bust, and which was edged at the bottom with a cord of gold, extended from the neck which was naked, to the knee which it scarcely touched. The dress resembled not a little

the *pelisse* of the modern Persians, save that the tightly-fitting sleeves were slashed, having a row of gold buttons extending from the wrist to the elbow. This *pelisse* was girt by a narrow girdle, which supported a sword with glittering and highly-decorated guard.

Under the cassock he wore integuments, not cut at the knee, but combining in one garment stockings and trousers, and drawn at one pull over the feet and thighs. It was not flowing, but tight, and revealing the shape of the symmetrical leg and knotted knee. It consisted of a plaided woollen cloth; in short, it was that garment which an ancient historian of Rome ascribes to a native of Gaul, when he says, *braccas tegmen barbarum indutus*. He walked with an air that reminded a spectator of the motion of a ship; his party-coloured scarf—a three-cornered piece of light stuff, which passed under his right, and rose over his left, shoulder—fluttering in the wind as he moved.

This individual, who bore a hawk on his hand, was accompanied by a young female, somewhat above the middle height, the carnation of whose lips, beautified by a lurking smile—and the enchanting contour of whose physiognomy, in which the very brightest roses seemed as it were enamelled on the very purest ivory—the pearly splendour of whose teeth, and the starry radiance of whose eyes—it was difficult to look on without love, and certainly quite impossible to look on without admiration.

"It would be to me," exclaimed the chief, "like field-sports without coursers, like liquor without horns, like festivity without the harp, royalty without obedience, or whatever besides may be of earthly things most inapt and incongruous, to return without—my lady and my love. No; an I have life, that sweet mouthful shall ne'er be tasted of an enemy;" and so saying, he looked fiercely round, laying his hand on his poignard, blue, sharp edged, and richly hilted.

Then her voice could be heard by the lurking robbers, like music, in reply; but the skulkers, all ears though they were, could not so distinctly catch her exact words.

"By my characteristics as a chief, thou shalt be safe!"

exclaimed the young man, with a noble but an impatient gesticulation.

"Ah! I cannot go," she replied; and when she spoke, it was "music spoken." After some unintelligible murmurings, he could be heard,—

"How cruelly, Maude, you tantalize me. You will drive me mad! I shall perish; and the clan—the free hearts, whom, for my sake, you vowed to cherish with me—the men who raised me, shouting, to their headship—who inaugurated me in the eye of the sun, in spite of every skulking foe, on the velvet swell of Ardnarigh—shall be headless, a broken clan, the prey of the accursed churls, who will ravage the free lands of Annaley, burn our ruffling harvests, and lay our homesteads in ashes. But come with me, my love, and the whole land shall rejoice. My belted clansmen—the race of the 'red swords'—with their shining blades, hearty voices, and imperishable affections, shall love thee like myself. Thou shalt be their queen! they shall adore thee; and remember, lady of the Pale, when thy Saxon kings were *buddahs*, we were sovereigns. My bold followers give themselves to me, and I give them—together with every tendril, every vein of my heart—to thee. They shall plunge into the glassy lake, to find glittering pearls for thy neck; climb the loftiest cliffs, to catch the falcon for thy wrist; and sweep the mountain forest, fleetier than the roe, to secure the fawn for thy playmate. Brehons and bards, clan and clansmen, sounding harp and choral voices, shall be thine as a bulwark more immovable than brass against thy scornors. What wouldst thou have, lady? Trifle not with the fiery blood that chases in these veins! The eagle, however high he soars, may be snared, as I am—but he refuses, unlike the baser fowl, to be tamed."

"But if, when I am far away—when I have abandoned all for thee," said the lady—"I tremble to imagine it—if thou shouldst change!"

"Oh how I love thee," was the reply; "thou knowest not how, else thou wouldst not doubt. I love thee as none but the fiercer and untameable of nature love!—as the lion that dies, but never abandons its mate."

"But if they should follow us—overtake us—those

brutal cousins of mine! How they would jeer me—I should die; and how,” she exclaimed, lowering her voice with unfeigned terror, “how could I face my father’s stern fury? And, if there were blows and bloodshed, as there doubtless would be, and thou shouldst be wounded—wounded, my Donald!”—and she looked up at him.

“A thousand naked swords are in this arm! I put this bugle to my lips, and they are beside us,” answered the chieftain. “At the head of my faithful people thou art safe. Though the whole Pale should arm—though with shouts and swords the whole swarm should rise; one clan, my clan, is more than a match for the whole boorish drove.”

“I cannot; I cannot; I cannot; I cannot,” she repeated.

He paused, drew back, and eyed her from head to foot; then smiled bitterly. “It shall all out,” he exclaimed, with terrible earnestness, and as if speaking to himself,—“the serpents that devour me, the hoarded griefs of my corroded heart! Rememberest thou not the evening I entered thine hall, lady, in the guise of a cowed palmer, bronzed, and stained, and foul as I was with travel; thy marriage-shout resounded through its walls. Oh! how sad my heart was to hear it. Alone I was that night; I leaned against a pillar. I have heard the shout of battle,—the scream of my foster brother perishing in my presence in his blood,—but I suffered not the pang that shot through my heart when I heard thy marriage cry. That cry thrilled my breast and paled my cheeks, and left me without strength; it told me the terrible truth—I was forgotten. I found *thee* forgetful; art thou now about again to forget?”

Poor Maude Barnewell at first blushed red as the berry of the quicken tree; her countenance then became black, and again pale, as if she were about to die. At length she said,—

“Is it in human nature to forget? No! every night I press that harp to my bosom,—I rain a thousand kisses on those crimson characters! I wash them with my scalding tears! When its golden strings speak under my fingers, they speak only of thee.”

“Ah! thou rememberest, then, the incident; thou

forgettest the emotions that prompted it, and bore me breathless over sea and land. Thou forgettest my feelings, mine agony, when blended with the cold and heartless churls—the rabble rout of thy people—I gazed with pale cheek and stony eye around me. God! O God! thou knewest me not, lady. I had met beauty in the lands of the olive,—had couched lance in tourneys, and beauties had honoured me with their guerdon,—but no smile, however sunny, no complexion, however bright, could rob *me* of thy memory. Alone on the deck of the galley—on the dusky bosom of the midnight ocean—thy image was at my side. Toiling o'er the parched and burning sands of Palestine—thou! thou wert near. I saw thy form amid the waving foliage of the feathery palm—in the sky, the sea, the midnight moon,—and thou couldst forget me! O Maude, it was cruel; no earthquake could appal me like that intelligence.”

Maude Barnewell, her bright eye swimming in tears, like an autumn sun in a watery cloud, and her cheek pale as the winter's moon, leaned her head against a tree, and seemed ready to expire. At length she exclaimed in a broken voice,—

“Spare me, O'Farrell, spare me! I am not fickle, I am not false; indeed I am not!”

“Thou rememberest the incident, then,” said he bitterly. “Ah! say not so,—all that has passed from thy memory; but I shall remind thee of it.”

“No! no!” she sobbed, “thine every word pierces my breast like a pointed arrow. Spare me! spare me!” and a shudder passed through her beautiful frame.

“Ah! it was cruel, Maude, to betray me,—to forget thy vows. I who risked life—all—all to appear before thee. I who broke through the bonds of a thousand prejudices, to mingle in that hated festival. Oh! to see all my dearest hopes wither in a moment. Thy kinsfolk—churlish, cold, brutal—were round me. I was in thy hall,—I wept tears of fire while burying my face in my sleeve. They eyed me. They gave me the harp—me! they asked me for a song—and from me! Yes! I obeyed!—

‘My curse, and the curse of God,
The curse, also, of the saints in heaven,

To the man who believes in the word of woman,
After her who thus forgets me.*

'Thou knowest the rest. Thou knowest that, drawing my small keen blade from my yellow gabardine, I buried the point in my flesh. I felt no pain. No blade is so sharp as thy forgetfulness. External pain was impossible,—there was too much in my heart. Thou knowest that, drawing my knife from my bosom, dripping with my own blood, I wrote those lines. Oh! thank heaven! I saw thee, when the harp was transferred to thee, gaze on those crimson letters,—gaze wildly on those words of crimson. They seared—or they should have seared—thine eyeballs. I stood mute, pale, agonizing. Thou lookedst round in wonder,—thy colour went and came. Hard-hearted girl, I made thee feel! Thank heaven, I made thee feel! The brightness of thy glance is still before me. Oh! that was a terrible moment. Thine eye wandered over the crowd. The brutal churls asked thee what imagination wrapt thee away from thyself."

"Spare me, O'Farrell; I can explain it all. They gave me a filtre,—for there be in this ancient land many sorcerers,"—and the beautiful speaker turned pale; "one of these they procured when thou wert gone. The cup was placed in a niche in my apartment—at my hand—it deprived me of my memory."

"No one gave *me* a filtre. Time, distance," replied O'Farrell, "the hardships and vicissitudes of my pilgrimage—nothing could tear away the image clinging to my heart. No one gave *me* a filtre."

"Donald! O Donald! 'tis thou who art cruel. Thine every word pierces my heart. Didst thou not see me lay my head on the bend of that harp,—the whole house stood still to hear me as I sung. They thought me insane:—

'Red to-night is the bend on the harp,
Dear is his blood!—his blood that is on it.
Dear his hand!—oh! dear his hand
That wrote that note upon its table!
Dear his hand that wrote the note,
With small knife, and snow-white hand!

*The reader will remember that this is a literal version of the original Irish.

Dear that knife with sharp blade,
That carved the gaps of noble art;
Dear his hair, flowing in glossy ringlets,
Dear his hands and his ruddy lips!

Cruel man! thou stoodst statue-like and cold; while laying my head on the bend of my harp, I fainted! Would that that trance were eternal,—*then* I had peace; then this agonizing heart had ceased to thrill. Oh! the martyrs of religion suffer less than the martyrs of love! How canst thou upbraid me? Thou sawest my despair—my horror—painted in frightful characters on my face of chalky whiteness,—and thou canst upbraid me! Thou who wast present, who sawest my father,—whilst the silent guests gazed in mute amazement,—approach and speak to me. He reproached me; and then caressed me. Thou sawest that tragedy, without a tear, without an emotion! He lifted me up on my chair, he gazed upon and kissed me; and pouring his sorrows into my heedless ear, called on me to speak to him. Thou sawest his agony and my temporary death. He was torn away from my person, to which he clung with frantic cries. All that passed before thee, without an emotion on thy part.”

“Yes!” said O’Farrell, “I saw those who robbed me of my happiness suffering the penalty of robbers. Oh! there was no agony like my agony. Thou wert dead!—better be dead like thee than live as I have done. Better opprobrium, imprisonment, poverty, stripes, chains, than stand as I did, and feel I was forgotten. But let the past *be* past; I’ll forget all!—all that I have suffered, if—if thou wilt fly with me now, my Maude.”

“No! no! ask me not, O’Farrell; I cannot—’tis impossible.”

Tearing open his pelisse, he bared his breast. “Look here, unfeeling girl,” he exclaimed, “thou seest this cross branded on my bosom,—scorched into my flesh with a red-hot iron. Thy churlish kinsmen, the brutal Saxons, impress the red cross on their garments,—the true-hearted Gael on their skin—in their flesh. Knowest thou why this cross is here?—oh! it was thy white hand,—thy cruel conduct that branded the sign of my redemption on my flesh. Go! it is all over. Unhappy lady, thou weepest! but no—thy

race cannot feel. Emotion was made for the Gael! Thank heaven! in arms I can serve my God. I shall leave *thee* to live,—*my* business is to die. Mayest thou be happy! For me, I shall bear the banner of redemption into the miscreant cohorts of the dusky *Shirishin*.”*

The poor girl could hear no more; uttering a cry of agony,—

“Ah! go not—I consent.”

So firm was the grasp which love had laid on the heart of O’Farrell—so overpowering the mastery which the passion gained upon his reason—he was so infatuated—so deeply wounded, that he felt inclined by main force to take her and fly with her that moment to his home, as the falcon bears to its nest the dove in its pounces. It would be more consonant to the military spirit—the daring and dashing character which his race had ever shown—to “woo her as the lion woos his bride,” and put an end to her hesitations, by substituting violence for persuasion. The brave, he had been ever taught, should possess the fair. Valour had a right to beauty; and of all the spoils which war furnishes to valour, woman was the most precious prize. O’Farrell was essentially a soldier, as every Gael is; and there is in the nature of war something savage, abrupt, and haughty, which will not brook the whims, the delays, the fantastic petulance and waywardness of woman. But his nature was too tender, noble, and elevated, to offer violence to that dear and beautiful girl. No! he would perish first. He dismissed the temptation to summon his clansmen, and make her his prey. He addressed her in the most eloquent words he was master of. He poured out a torrent of those endearing epithets and honied terms so gratifying to the female heart—so soothing to the female ear—which abound in a language cultivated by lyric poets during four thousand years. At last she said, after hearing him a long time,—

“This night I shall fly with thee;” and with these words, bursting into a paroxysm—a deluge of tears—she hid her face in his breast. When she had poured out her whole heart, and emptied, as it were, the deep fountain of her sorrows, she said—her bosom “shaken with a storm of

* *Sijurree*, Saracens.

—hoarse and fierce—who seemed more Irish than the Irish themselves.

In answer to the speech of Lord Gormanstown, the Lord of Shiomain replied :—

“ My Lord of Gormanstown’s opinion is good, so it had been spoken before our coming. This matter was determined before we came hither, deliberately by the council; and if it were not, the time is now come to argue the case; and as for the displeasure of our prince, if we win the campaign, as I am sure we shall, though the king frown a little with his countenance, his heart will rejoice. But admit he will be offended upon losing this cause,—he that shall live, let him bear the blame or burden. As for my part, I am assured to win, or to lose my life; and then all the world is gone with me—*vayel que vayel pourra*—for I will be a-foot in the wayward myself. But to the matter. Let us cause our sons and heirs to remain at home to revenge our quarrel, if need so require, and prescribe our battles in perfect order this night, that every man shall know to-morrow his charge. For it is not when we shall go to fight that we should be troubled with discussing the matter.”

“ Well,” said the Earl of Kildare, “ my dear cousin, you have well spoken; be it as you now have said.”

Gerot, the young Lord of Kildare, cried, “ By God’s blood! I will not go hence and leave so many of my friends in danger, for I mean to live and die among you.”

“ All well,” said the Earl of Shiomain. “ Boy, thou speak’st natural—for, ever these Geraldines are such from the first generation, and first coming to Ireland; so thou art to be borne withal, thou worthy gentleman and lion’s heart.”

Lords Killeen and Trimlestown were of opinion that since they had been informed by the spies that the number of the Irish was overwhelming, “ a good giving back,” as Lord Trimlestown expressed it, “ were better than an evil standing, and in further time better provision might be made to serve such a turn.”

The misgivings of Trimlestown were concurred in by the caution of Lord Dunsany, who emphatically and curtly

observed, in reference to the opinion of Trimlestown, "It is well said."

Lord Shiomain could not well contain himself. "By our Lady, that is blessed in the North Church of Howth, you three might have spoken these words in some other ground than this."

"Well," said the Earl of Kildare, turning to the leader of the gallowglass, "you and yours shall begin this game, for it is less fair of you than it is of our younger men."

"I tell you what it is,—I am glad in my heart, and you can do me no greater honour, my Lord of Kildare," said McComas, the captain of gallowglass; and so saying, he took his axe in his hand, and began to brandish and flourish it.

"No," said the Lord of Shiomain. "I will be the beginner of this dance, and my kinsmen and friends; for we will not hazard our English goods upon the Irish bloods. Howbeit, it is well spoken by the captain of the gallowglass, nor shall they not be mixed among us."

CHAPTER XXX.

"From the Boyne to the Linn
Has the mandate been given,
That the children of Finn
From their country be driven.
We starve at the board,
And we thirst amid wassail:
For the guest is the lord,
And the host is the vassal."

SAMUEL FERGUSON.

THE Lords of the Pale were a bi-lingual race. When public affairs were discussed, they generally employed English; but when they spoke from the heart—from love, hate, or sorrow—they spoke Irish. English was the vehicle of reason; Irish, that of emotion.

The younger nobles had gone forth, and the elders were clustered into a smaller group; their voices were lower, and *their expressions* more earnest and eloquent.

"If he prove obstinate?" queried the Earl of Kildare in a whisper.

"Off with his head!" exclaimed the captain of the gallowglass, handling his axe.

"But are you certain to capture him?" queried Lord Bermingham cautiously.

"We have kidnapped a minstrel of his, who is his confidant, and who has been prowling through the land as his espial."

"But he is dumb."

"Yes, at present; but to the rack with him—that will make him communicative."

"You have him safe?"

"He's in the donjon."

"Would that the master were there."

"The fool!" quoth another, "to fancy he could frustrate Howth."

"The girl is a good lure; her glove has beguiled him into Dublin. It is for us to see that he return not."

"It is our duty to civilize Ireland," said a third, doubtfully—his conscience pricking him—"which can never be done until the Irish be exterminated, and their properties confiscated?" He said this in the tone of inquiry.

"Well, to begin, we have the bard; we shall tie him howling to the strappado."

"Yes!" and after a long pause, "the girl must be removed to the black tower."

"So be it. O'Farrell is certain to come prowling about the tower: we need no minstrel to tell us that."

"Let it be Barnewell's business to capture him when he comes. Then the lash, the strappado, the rack, hunger, and the dungeon, will tame his wild blood, and make the savage rational."

"Is the deed drawn?"

"Here it is."

"Yes!" said the earl, after conning it carefully. "If he put his name to this, the king will thank us."

"He shall put his name to it, else his skull shall bleach *and grin* in wind and rain on the summit of these towers."

"It certainly is not just, or right, to take the life of this man, an' it can be spared."

"True! Better to rack surrender out of him, and then dungeon him for life."

"Yes! that were better."

"It is our duty to do it. My lords, our coming into this country originally was, as I take it from chronicle, in this way:—Our forefathers were henchmen to M^cMurrough, king of Leinster. We throned *him*; and in lieu he planted us in this land. From servants we have risen to masters. By bloodshed we got foot in this land,—as soldiers got we entry. By bloodshed we must keep in it. By being auxiliary to his quarrel came we in; so, by being auxiliary to others' quarrels, must we go on. Above all, my lords, we must lose no opportunity of diminishing the heads of clans,—members were easily manageable were the heads lopped off. By all means get rid of heads. The natives be more in number than we. Our danger is great. In England there is no mean subject that durst extend his hand to fillip a peer of the realm: not so here. In Ireland, unless the peer have cunning with his strength, to take thieves and varlets, he shall find them swarm so fast, that it will be too late to call for justice. See how we fare! We slumber in hard cabins, when English lords sleep in soft beds of down. We serve under the king's cope of heaven, when they are served under silken canopies. We drink water out of our skulls,* when they drink wine out of golden cups. Our coursers are trained to the field, when their genetis are taught to amble. When they are begraced and belorded, then find we small grace with our Irish borderers, until we cut them off by the knees."

"Touching Suileogue," said an old noble with white hair.

"What of him," said several at once, in low earnest voices.

"Touching Suileogue,—I brake with him to kill O'Farrell."

"Suileogue is, I take it, a losel with one eye and sharkish teeth?" queried two or three.

* Helmets.

"The same."

"Well? well?" they eagerly asked.

"I bound myself by my oath to see him have a hundred marks of land to him and his heirs for reward. He seemed desirous to serve the king and have the land, but fearful to do it. I told him the ways he might do it, and how to escape after with safety, which he offered and promised to do; but he loiters."

"He is dangerous—he must be made away with. The ungrateful rascal!"

"Softly," quoth the other, shutting one eye; "if he will not do what he may in our service, there will be done to him what others may."

"Right! right!"

"There is," said Bermingham, surnamed Pishogah, "another reason why we should be careful, and lose no occasion to kill the Irishry, and spread the English in this land. The Irish are known to have four men whom they account to be great prophets—Merlin, Bracton, Patrick, and Columkill—whose books and prophecies they have among themselves in their own language. These prophets do not assure any perfect or full conquest unto the English nation, not much before doomsday. Moreover, these Irish being uncertain, crafty, and subtle, are—under cloak of peace—wont always to be studying and devising of mischiefs, like this O'Farrell. Their peace is but enmity, their policies but craft, their friendship but coloured, and therefore the more to be doubted and feared."

"But what is his offence?"

"Offence enough that he is Irish. If we lack his other offences, we have his bard. We'll touze him joint by joint, until we know his lord's designs; wring confession of him; he will tell his offence."

"It is not just."

"But it is politic,—and policy any day before justice. Those who love not the king may object to it; and, as touching the bard, my lords, it is a service to the crown to kill a man who corrupteth the young, and spreadeth sedition. We all know how they write, as of a notorious thief and outlaw, which hath lived all his life of spoils and robbery; of him these bards will say, he was none

of those idle milk-sops that was brought up by the fireside, but that most of his days he spent in arms and valiant enterprises; that he did never eat his meat before he had won it with his sword; that he lay *not* all night slugging in a cabin under his mantle, but used commonly to keep others waking, and did light his candle at the flames of their houses, to lead him in the darkness; that the day was his night, and the night his day; that he loved not to be long wooing the wenches, but where he came he took by force the spoil of other men's love. How can civility stand with such principles?"

"Besides, Brother Simon, of the order of Friars Minor," said Lord Delvin, "has publicly preached, that there be none harm in killing or robbing an Irishman. Our monks of the Pale say that, after killing a man of that nation, they should not think themselves bound to abstain from saying mass. Then wherefore should we hesitate? As a proof, the Cistercian monks at Granard, in the diocese of Armagh, in Ulster, are daily attacking them with the lance and sword, yet say their masses as usual. Wherefore should we be squeamish." *

Let us observe, in explanation. A feeling of the blackest malignity had been aroused in the Knights of the Pale by the generosity and comeliness of person—by the lofty bearing and dexterity in arms—of Donald O'Farrell. To crush him, *per fas et nefas*—to extinguish his rivalry in his blood—became the darling object of their malevolence. But how? Were they to trail him through the tortuosities of English law, or knife him by the assassin? That was their question. Above all things, they desired to colour their crime with the show of general good—to make it appear that they served the Pale, and not their private jealousy and grudge.

* *Vide* Letter of Donald O'Neil, King of Ulster, to the Pope.—*Taafe's Ireland*.

CHAPTER XXXI.

“Poison be their drink!
Gall—worse than gall—the dainties that they taste!
Their sweetest shade a grove of cypress trees!
Their chiefest prospects murdering basilisks!
Their music frightful as the serpent’s hiss!
And boding screech-owls make the concert full!”

SHAKESPEARE.

A FEW days subsequently to the council described in the last chapter, the castle presented a singular scene. In the centre of the courtyard, which was heavily paved with square masses of hewn granite, stood an iron stake, bare, naked, and immoveable. The butt of this stake, reddish with fire, was rooted in a block of igneous rock, from which, like an evil shoot, it seemed to have grown. An iron ring, to which a massive collar and chain of iron were attached, and which was so loose as to slither up and down the stake, was lying, chains and all, round its base. That yard was surrounded with massive walls, which were constructed in such a manner as to render sound inaudible outside the yard. Their construction was wavy or billowy—broken into horizontal protuberances and depressions. This unusual construction had the effect of breaking the wave of air when agitated by the human voice, and rendering screams and out roar inaudible, save and except in the immediate vicinity of the stake. If my readers are acquainted with the science of acoustics, they will understand the deadening effect of this architectural arrangement, which seems to have been devised by the devil, to facilitate the perpetration of torture. This wall was lined with men, armed with morrice pikes, grim of countenance, and silent as statues. One corner was filled with piles of fagots of resinous wood—logs of elm and dry furze or gorse—while above all rose the darksome towers and battlements of the castle.

Between two gruff-looking janitors—scowling and frowning ruffians—arrayed in leathern jerkins, and armed with long iron forks, tottered forth an old man from under a low narrow arch of massive stone, of which the iron-

studded door was flung wide open. His countenance was delicate and intellectual—his face deadly pale—his hair scattered and thin—his eye shining, wild, and glaring with emotion; but his thin lips were sternly compressed, with deliberate determination—with unalterable resolution, to suffer fire itself, rather than betray. His motion was of a peculiar nature; he seemed to be feeling the ground with his foot as he walked. His mantle had been stripped from his bare shoulders; his hands were rudely but securely manacled behind his back; his minstrel gown, however, had *not* been torn from his back; it was his only covering. In another minute the dumb old man, who scorned to cry, to entreat, or even to speak, was rudely thrust, staggering backwards against the stake, by the brawny arms of his powerful guardian, who then stooping, drew up the rattling chain, ring, and collar of iron, with a great clatter. Having cleared away his gray locks, the massive collar was locked by the executioners round the bare, wrinkled, skinny neck of the old gray-bearded victim.

He who was learned in chronicle, who carried in his memory endless romances, and could string the lyre to lofty themes of war—he was at the stake, surrounded by boorish, morose, and piggish Englishmen, who, cold-blooded and stupid, were considering, not him nor his minstrelsy, but what flagons of ale they should gulp, and what platters of bacon they should gorge, at their next meal. In vain had he protested he was *not* the Dollaher. Indeed, the authorities knew he was not; but they were determined to find a victim—to make an example. It is true that at times the guise of a minstrel had been assumed by the Dollaher. But it by no means followed, that because the Dollaher was sometimes a minstrel, every strolling minstrel was that heinous culprit. This was a distinction, however, which the haughty barons refused to understand. Not content to accuse the poet of being the Dollaher (which he was not), they accused him of being an associate of O'Farrell's, which he was. They hoped in this way to throw the meshes of the law over that "sheltering tree of the learned of Erin," as O'Farrell was termed. They had, with this view, subjected the old poet to the

moustache—footed it featly round the upright spear, and at a little distance an eyeless minstrel, on a verdant mound, struck his angular instrument, and cheered the revellers with the merry music of the *Claursha*, eliciting the quick, gay, rapture-giving tunes that make young hearts tremble whether they will or no.

A group of the people in the vale were listening to a romancer, or *comatoyt*, who charmed their rapt attention by his tales of sorcery. Some were seated round a chess-board, silently and intently studying the *byanhyah*, or "men;" others, perched on an open point that commanded a prospect, were grouped round a minstrel, where the sparkling mead, and foaming *cujum*, went round in polished shells and capacious horns, hooped and crowned with rings of shining metal. These revellers were continually pledging each other in their ornamented cups. Though these valesmen were, she thought, the people whom she had so often heard described as the "furious and warlike nation of the O'Byrnes," there was certainly very little in their present appearance that was furious or warlike.

For a moment our heroine gave way to the notion that this scene was an illusion. After footing it round the war-spear, the revellers would, she fancied, sink into the hill, and all melt away like mist. But their laughing voices were too clear, loud, and human, for the long continuance of such a thought. Beside them, too, at a little distance, she perceived the smoke curling up through the foliage, where a *muah*, or house, was embosomed in noble and aged trees.

Finally the circle broke up, and she perceived that amid great hubbub, two of the party, a youth and maiden, remarkable for comeliness, blushing and coy, were chosen by common consent, and seated on a slope, where they were solemnly crowned with a rosy circlet, and proclaimed aloud with the sound of a *struc*, or trumpet, the king and queen of the revellers of the vale. The king, rising and extending his hand, ordered the spear to be upturned, and the shield upon the blade to be brought to the feet of his rose-crowned consort. Then another maiden who, in the judgment of the rural monarch, appeared to be the best dancer present, was summoned to the feet of the sore-

reigns, and presented with the brightest rose and the sweetest cake in the concave buckler. The girl who was thus honoured—a beautiful creature of fifteen—did not keep these prizes for a moment—prizes which seemed to pain her, but hastened, while blushing to the roots of her auburn hair, which was kept back by a silken fillet—to generously bestow them on her companions. The king then rewarded the second-best dancer with the second-best rose, and then the third; and in this way distributed the rich contents of the shield to the whole party. The sovereigns, content with their dignity, reserved nothing for themselves, but evidently felt relief when the prizes were distributed. Then, at the king's command—who, leading his consort by the hand, descended from his throne—a new and noisy evolution was performed, which resolved the whole company into a chain, consisting of a youth and a maiden, and then a maiden and a youth, and then again a stripling and a virgin, until the party were linked hand in hand in one long line of revellers. Then the king and queen, who constituted the first links of the living chain, raised their joined hands, so as to form an arch, and the whole swift line, doubling up from its remoter extremity, passed stooping under the upraised hands of the king and queen—an evolution which they repeated again and again, with the greatest laughter, noise, and delight.

While this joyous scene absorbed her interest, she suddenly bounded from the earth, as a deep gruff growl, harsh and savage, perfectly metallic in its sound, burst beside her, and alarmed her almost out of her wits; and a large bristling dog, with elevated ears—a giant hound—stood snuffing, as it were for blood, fiercely and inquiringly before her; his pointed ears were raised, and his eye seemed to ask as plainly as human speech, "Who are you?" The poor girl looked at his fierce, rough, and sagacious face, as if claiming his silence. His neck, legs, and belly, were white; and he was in shape very like a greyhound, but much larger, and more rough. He seemed at that moment the direst enemy she ever beheld, as he opened his great red mouth, and poured out a piercing peal of latration, which sounded in her ears like thunder. For a few minutes she lost the visual faculty—she fainted.

Suddenly a number of youngsters, handsome and well-complexioned, soft-skinned and ingenuous-looking, put aside the leafy boughs. Their clustering ringlets, curling round their bare necks and moist faces, were surmounted by small-pointed caps, which they took off in her presence, as they gazed upon the cowering female with keen perspicuity and silent astonishment. The poor trembling girl gazed upon the ground, and her fine tresses fell like a silken veil over her beautiful face and trembling bosom. An expression or two—extremely guttural—which she could not, in her trepidation, catch the meaning of, passed between the men, and they immediately relinquished the branches, and disappeared. A few moments subsequently, two young girls, whose innocent countenances inspired the utmost confidence, put aside the boughs, and welcomed her in cordial and musical voices, to the mountain-homes of the valesmen, presenting her, at the same time, with snowy cruises of milk, and platters of honey, baskets of fruit, and white bread in abundance, sufficient to serve five persons. After a time, and many entreaties, the poor lady was tempted to taste the milk, which they pressed upon her in the kindest manner. A third girl, with a rosy and smiling face, saluted and welcomed the stranger. She quickly brought up a venerable harp, on which she played an accompaniment while singing a song, which abounded in welcomes. After a few moments a fourth girl approached, bearing a lapful of flowers; while a fifth came with a bird, which flapped its wings upon her hand, and which she solicited the stranger to accept from her.

Meantime, the milk which the young lady quaffed gave her, she felt, unexpected animation; and this for a reason quite unknown to her—it was drugged with a spirit destitute of smell and taste, which the valesmen, who have since lost the art, knew how to extract from the rich harvests of their autumnal fields. They managed to remove the foliage-covered branches, and opened out a noble prospect previously concealed from her. As she looked out, an incident occurred which interested her. She saw an eagle hovering at a sublime height in the sky, from which it swooped suddenly down upon a goat, which scampered with desperate swiftness to escape the crook-billed and

oned marauder; but the lordly bird, plunging his hooked claw in the creature's back, became master of its movements, and guided its terrified precipitation by the wing motion of his wings, up the face of the mountain. The savage bird directed the bleeding and frightened animal swifter than lightning to a precipice, down the side of which the victim tumbled headlong, accompanied by the crooked-billed marauder, which, at the bottom, only stood, on feathered legs, upon the body, and gorged flesh at his leisure. The scenery which spread on every side, magnificent, and yet cultivated, and extending far away, till it blended with the skies, was studded with hills of refuge for the peasantry—stony and dark—to which the O'Byrnes hurried with their oxen, and horses, and dogs, whenever her countrymen, the lowlanders, or Finians, unfurling the black banner of Dublin, sallied from the stone-belted city, to burn the crops and level the lands of the men of the mountains—from which, however, they often returned with bloody heads and disgraceful omfiture. The magnificent forests—the pure and sparkling rivulets—the wheeling eagle, rising from his nest—the happy homes—the pasturing beeves, dotting the verdant sward on the slope of the vale—constituted a prospect gratifying and cheering in an eminent degree. The young men, meantime, had gone, some to scour the country through which she had passed, to ascertain whether she was followed by foes or friends; and some to maintain the *mariscal*, or marshal of the clan, with the val of a stranger in their country. The moment our heroine entered the vale, a long line of young girls, linked hand to hand, formed a revolving zone round her, and united in what appeared to be a song of some, which they improvised on the occasion.

“ Bashful maiden, banish fear,
 Welcome waits the stranger here !
 Honour, exiled from the plains,
 Here amid our hills remains :
 Justice, truth, and modesty,
 Live alone among the free !
 Beauteous maiden, never fear,
 Welcome waits the stranger here.”

and this had been repeated until all the valley rang

with it, one sweet voice warbled the following sentiments:—

“Through our vales a swarm of flowers
Wreath their beauties round our bowers;
Friends and lovers cull them there,
Virgins wind them in their hair!
Like the swarming stars they bloom,
And yield us pleasure and perfume!
But the lovely primrose coy,
Yields the warmest tide of joy.
In that bashful flower we see
An emblem, beauteous girl, of thee!
Banish sorrow! never fear!
Cankered care shall ne’er appear!
Welcome waits the stranger here!
Banish sorrow! banish fear!
Welcome waits the stranger here!
Smiles shall soon replace the tear;
Welcome waits the stranger here!”

The exertions which Maude Barnewell had made in her flight to the mountains, overtasked her powers. Overcome by the unexpected kindness of this wild welcome, the vigour which had sustained her in difficulties disappeared in the more sunny moment of returning prosperity. She could not sustain the change; leaning back upon the girls beside her, she suddenly swooned—became rigid and insensible as a corpse.

CHAPTER XLI.

“Oh then shall our halls with the Gaelic resound,
In the notes of the claursha half-mingled and drowned;
And the banquet be spread, and the chess-board all night
Test the skill of our chiefs and their power for the fight.

“The skies shall rain love on the land’s breadth and length,
And the grain rise like armies battalioned in strength,
And the mighty shall rule unassailed in their might,
And all voices be blent in one choir of delight.”

PHILIP FITZGIBBON, translated.

OUR heroine, insensible but beautiful, was borne into a large *parlour* or house, and deposited on a soft bed in a solitary chamber. A long fit of illness ensued, during which every

attention was lavished on her by the female members of the family. As she gradually and slowly recovered, she found to her surprise that the owner of this ample residence (which abounded in the necessities of life, swarmed with domestics, and was richly furnished) owed his wealth to his poetry. This fact, which she learned from one of the poet's daughters, who night and day sat by her side, filled her with astonishment. The inhabitants of the Pale were in intelligence and civilization so far inferior to the native Irish, that they looked upon a literary character—a poet or minstrel—as little better than an amusing vagabond or diabolical wizard. They could not see his utility, and regarded him with secret scorn or superstitious dread. In England, Bacon and others were abhorred as magicians, and the Palesmen found it difficult to imagine a poet without supposing him to hold intercourse with a fiend. The idea of endowing a song-maker with landed property, and considering rhymes as an equivalent for real estate, is too advanced an idea, even in this day, to find ready entrance into the English mind. To the barbarism of their ancestors, it appeared ridiculous or maniacal. This was owing to the newness of the English people—their recent emergence from a savage state. Literature must be cultivated through a long series of centuries—longer at least than the duration of pagan Rome—the native language must attain a high degree of perfection and polish—great expressiveness—must present the poet with an energetic instrument of which he may exercise a powerful mastery—its influence must be widely appreciated and deeply felt—it must have penetrated the hearts of men—before society will consent to endow a poet with green acres. The Irish language was an instrument of the kind alluded to. “The tongue is sharp and sententious,” says Stanihurst, “and offers great occasion to quick apothegm and proper allusion.” “Among the Celtic nations,” says Blair, “the bards continued to flourish, not as a set of strolling songsters, like the rhapsodists of Homer's time, but an order of men highly respected in the state and supported by a public establishment.” “There is among the Irish,” says Spenser, “a certain sort of people named *bards*, who are unto them instead of poets, *the which* are had in so high estimation amongst them

that none dare displease them." The social status of a nation may be ascertained by a solitary institution, as the shape of a single bone may demonstrate the nature and habits of a great quadruped. A nation can never get rid of its intellectual classes. We always have the poets amongst us. In spite of rags, hunger, ridicule, and cremation, the "teachers" will crop up. Society, let it struggle as it will, can never trample out and annihilate them. "The world," says Carlyle—meaning Greece, Rome, and England—"has shown but small favour to its teachers. Hunger and nakedness, perils and reviling, the prison, the cross, and the poison-chalice, have, in most times and countries, been the market price it has offered for wisdom—the welcome with which it has greeted those who have come to enlighten and purify it." But, though Tasso pined in the cell of a mad-house, and Camoens died begging in the streets of Lisbon, they existed nevertheless. It is not in the power of society, no matter how bloody and barbarous, to rid itself of intellectual men. The man whom the muses love will devote himself to their altars in spite of misery, torture, martyrdom. Not only this, but if society last long enough—if it become thoroughly civilized—the favourites of the muses will master it—nay, put it under their heel. But society must exist for a vast number of centuries in a civilized state before the civil and ecclesiastical hierarchy will submit to literati. The savage is always a materialist—meat, drink, and clothes are his *summum bonum*. He cannot possibly comprehend the utility of literature. Hence Gibbon very truly remarks, "The use of letters is the principal circumstance which distinguishes a civilized people from a herd of savages." This does not refer to science: "*Un peuple qui ne serait que savant*," says Fontanes, "*pourrait devenir barbare; un peuple de lettres est de sa nature et necessairement poli et sociable*."

Nations that are semi-civilized, like the ancient Greeks, may love and enjoy literature. But it is only when a community are much more refined that they will elevate philosophers into princes, and place the brains of the nation in the head of the state. This elevated stage ancient Greece never reached. In ancient Greece, Homer begged, *Heraclitus* lived on grass, Aristotle was persecuted, *Anax*,

agoras imprisoned, Sophocles regarded as a madman. None of these men ever enjoyed landed property as a reward for literary proficiency. This phase of society, which Greece never entered, modern Europe, like ancient Ireland, will ultimately attain. Strauss foreshadowed the change, when he said, "The only shred of religion which has been left us, by the revolution of the last century, is the worship of genius."

CHAPTER XLII.

"Away, nor let me loiter in my song,
For we have many a mountain path to tread;
And many a varied shore to sail along,
By pensive Sadness, not by Fiction, led;
Climes fair withal, as ever mortal head
Imagined in its little schemes of thought,
Or e'er in new Utopias were aëd."—BYRON.

THE *Vanihee*, or mistress of the path, assured our heroine that she was aware of her coming. She knew by her dreams that a dove would take refuge in the trees of the valley. She had placed a cushion on a chair that morning for the bird of beauty. On this cushion, on her recovery, she seated our heroine—sat beside her, and kissed her repeatedly; soothed away her sorrows, and called her "the pulse of her heart;" and then she repeated a verse—for these people were always rhyming,—

"Amid the wintry gloom of night, a shining dove I saw.
It fled the archer's savage bow—the falcon's cruel claw.
I heard its wailing in the elms, I saw its trembling breast.
'Come down,' I said, 'thou victim-dove, I'll give thee food and rest.
My bird beneath this roof of straw, I'll save thee from the chase.
My clan shall fence thee with the swords of Brandhu's free-born race,
With targes red, with bucklers bossed, to fling the war aside,
The brave shall shield the bird that comes with this old heart to bide.'"

When she had seated our heroine, she proceeded to tell her a story, how once upon a time there was an enchanted cow. She was white as the snow, with large and eloquent eyes—a hide as smooth and glossy as silk, and the most *symmetrical* figure that ever was seen "with a cow." The

happy homes, that then were embosomed in the woodlands of the country of O'Byrne, were all successively visited every morning by this enchanted cow. She came with distended udder, ever overflowing, to every door that stood in the music loving vales of O'Byrne. She lowed over the garden paling, and the glad and rosy children swarmed clamorously out to greet and hail her with cups in hand, and delight in their smiling faces; and the busy housewife hurried with capacious pail, and straw stool, and blessings, and welcome, to relieve the dumb but generous visitor of her rich treasure; and "though she were milked a hundred times a day, nevertheless she would, at each milking, fill a pail," said the story-teller. Was not this some princely spouse of a warrior king, often victorious in glorious war, who had been subjected to a distressing metamorphosis by the demon-hand of some cunning and wicked Druid? No! she should tell a true tale, and relate her weird story from its earliest date. One fine day a peasant youth was idling in the sun where the forest was green, and where the sward, dotted with kine, resembled the richest velvet, when the cow-boy was roused to terror by the alarming appearance of a mist which descended from the sky in the form of a cloud. Its mighty masses sailed in vapoury billows over the plain, settling on the beeves, round which it gathered, until the oxen were mantled in the murk. After an interval the cloud dispersed and sunshine reappeared, when, to his astonishment and horror, he saw one of his beeves browsing lightly on the top of a forest tree, which it seemed to tread with as much firmness as if on the ground. The young herdsmann, beside himself with terror, fled from the plain to acquaint his master with the dangerous elevation of his cow. His stammering tongue, his eyes wild with fear, and his white visage bathed in perspiration, bore evidence alike to his alarm and his truthfulness. The master, pale with anxiety, tremulously told the youth to bring him a cruise of the milk of that particular cow. "But how shall I get to her, master, and she perched on the top of the highest tree in the wide forest?" "Return, child," exclaimed the Broohy calmly, "you will find her on the greensward on your return." In compliance with his master's desire, the boy returned to the herd, and having milked the cow, he

looked upon the snowy fluid with no little curiosity, and felt as he gazed an irresistible temptation to swallow it. He sipped it, and found it so delicious that he could not control himself, but putting the vessel to his head, gulped it at one draught. Nothing could surpass the rage of his master on finding that his cow-boy had thus deprived him of that magic draught which, as he knew, had the virtue of communicating all the talents and powers of a magician to the bibber. It provoked him beyond all bearing to be outwitted by this shambling and slobbering idiot, and in his fury he seized the lad, and tying him with gads, neck and heels, locked him up in a stable.

A few evenings afterwards—a little before the setting of the sun—there entered the court-yard of that very farmhouse a small weird-looking, brown-faced man, with restless, penetrating eyes, expressive of inward pain, and having snaky hair that hung in elfin tresses round his hatchet face. He was accompanied by a female, as remarkable in person as himself, who carried several articles of a most singular appearance. This man refused to enter the farmer's house; but on receiving meat and drink, squatted upon a piece of party-coloured cloth, which he spread upon the earth with his own hands. When he had eaten his meal, he made a circle on the floor round his carpet, and taking out a bag, he commenced throwing into the air several magic balls, which he caught and flung aloft with surprising quickness and dexterity. One ball, however, he threw so high that it became invisible for several minutes, during which he waited impatiently, gazing up into the sky, and calling it by name, and insisting on its return. Meantime the servants and neighbours had swarmed into the court and surrounded the small brown magician, contemplating his performances with admiration and awe. Finding that his ball did not come down, he turned swiftly and scanned the rustics round him with a piercing glance. "There is a prisoner in this house," he exclaimed; "let him be liberated, or it will be injurious to us all." The frightened farmer hurried to liberate the cow-boy, whom he brought out and placed in the very presence of the brown magician, whereupon the latter exhibited the lost ball in his left hand. "Hear!" said the magician, "you shall now see the most

curious performance that ever was exhibited since the times of Goban the seer. I shall fling this ball of worsted into the heights of the heavens, where the man in the moon, who cut his gossip's tree, whom you cannot yet discern, will fasten it round the right horn of the luminary he lives in."

So saying, he flung the ball into the air, which, unrolling as it rose, went up out of sight,—the thread which the magician held in his hand remaining visible, and apparently hanging out of the sky. "Here," said the magician to his wife, who was clothed with a cloak and trousers, or braccaun, like those of the *Gaels*, "climb up this thread and loose the extremity which the man in the moon has tied to one of the horns of that luminary."

The woman in a moment threw off her cloak, and mainly grasping the thread with both hands, ascended into the air as nimbly as a monkey. When she got about two miles high she stopped and looked back, but the magician stamped his foot and raised his hands, and motioned to her to continue her ascent, whereupon, putting hand over hand, she was seen wearily climbing up the cord until, smaller and smaller, she dwindled apparently to the size of a wren, after which she was entirely lost sight of. Then the magician took off his cap, and, going round the company, begged money; and testoons, and reals, and bonns, and even ounces, were showered upon this wonderful performer. When this was over, he called his wife by her name—"Alarain! Alarain!"—when a faint voice was heard descending from the clouds, but so distant as to be almost inaudible, and resembling a voice that had died.

"Oh! my wife is in great danger!" exclaimed the pale magician. "Is there any one here," he asked, looking round, "who for charity and money will go up to her, and give her some relief and assistance."

"I will! I will!" said the cow-boy, coming forward and grasping the thread; and, catching it nimbly in his toes, he succeeded in swinging up like a cat. When the cow-boy had ascended so high as to become invisible, the magician called again, "Alarain! Alarain!" to which she faintly and distantly responded; whereupon the magician smiled and leaped with joy, saying that his dear wife was free from the danger which had threatened her, and that he should

reward the youth who had gone up so magnanimously,—adding, he expected the young man to come back in a minute or two. A whole hour, however, elapsed, and still the young cow-boy did not reappear.

“You are an unfortunate wight,” said one of the bystanders, “to send that stripling after your wife! There is not in the whole kingdom a more amorous spark,—he makes love in a most irresistible manner!”

“You only jest,” replied the magician, affecting a sickly smile.

“No, I by no means jest,” returned the spectator. “Every man here, and every woman especially, will corroborate my statement.”

“I am lost!” screamed the little magician, clapping his horny hands frantically, and wringing them bitterly, and then he cried, “Alarain! Alarain!” and listened pale and attentive, expecting a reply; but “Alarain” was doubtless better employed, and continued silent. Whereupon, hurriedly gathering his instruments into a bag, and flinging it wildly over his shoulder, he seized the cord, clambered up into the air himself, shouting and gesticulating until he was invisible.

Immediately after the disappearance of the conjurer, the cord on which he ascended began to undulate in a strange manner—a wavy motion passed along it, as if it were shaken or loosed on the top by some unseen and wizard hand. It floated hither and thither in the atmosphere for some time, and then lapsed suddenly down, and fell in a disorderly coil on the ground. For a moment it remained motionless, but only for a moment. It suddenly became animated, and full of activity. It wound itself into a close coil, with the rapidity of lightning, and, after infinite turnings, became a ball, as it had been originally. The moment it was wound up, it began to roll swiftly forward, as if some invisible foot had given it a prodigious kick. The wild and insatiable curiosity which seized on the spectators made them follow the ball like men demented. Every one was eager to catch it; but it evaded their grasp. No one could succeed. Yet it stopped occasionally, when they lagged behind, as if luring them to renew the pursuit. It rolled down into deep glens, where they were

all bemired; it skirted the torrent, where they were drenched with water; it plunged into the forests, where they were torn by thorns; and it bounded up the face of precipices, where they fell, and were bruised. Still it went on, and they still breathlessly pursued. Night and day it fled their grasp, and night and day they followed. Finally, it came to the stormy margin of the ocean, where the surging waves were tossing mountains high, and chafing the rocks with hoarse and hungry fury, splashing and bellowing, as if they would fain devour all who ventured to approach. Into this wild yeast the ball plunged, and its pursuers leaped after it. Down they sank through the waters like lead—down, down, until they reached טיף פֿאָר דעם, the country under the sea. This טיף was roofed with a crystal dome, as extensive as the ocean which rolled over and rested on it, and was supported by massive pillars of solid gold. The land under the dome was covered with floating harvests of bearded corn, and orchards laden with fruits; the thrush was warbling in the trees, and the lark soaring in the crystal arch. In this happy country the *sigh*,* who had invisibly propelled the ball, became for the first time visible. He was of gigantic stature, and resembled for the most part a man. But his neck was as long and lithe as a conger eel. Owing to the length of his throat, his voice resembled the sound of a trumpet. He could inspect his own back, and place his head between his knees. If he spoke to a child, he bent his snaky neck, and put his ear to its lips; and when passing by a high house he occasionally hoisted up his head, and looked down into the chimney. If he chose to lower his neck, and conceal it under the folds of his lene, he could place his head on his shoulders, and pass for an ordinary human being.

Holding the ball in his hand, he addressed the Broochy and his family, as soon as the crystal door was closed, which shut out the ocean. "Ho, ho! my old customers," said the gigantic *sigh*, "we have you at last, I believe. I thought it would come to this. Nothing would do you but to imprison your cow-boy; but I'll teach you to respect

*The *173^{he}* of Irish fiction resemble the genii of the East.

your labourers—faith, I will! Meantime, you need not look so blue—a pound of sorrow never paid an ounce of debt. You are caged now, and the devil mend you. Now, I am going to give you advice. Mind now what I say and if you do not, you'll be sorry for it. Make no remarks on what you see in this place. There is no liberty of speech here. Hold your *3ab.** Now mind," he continued, "if you break the rules, you will get no mitigation; you will do every day of your time—seven years, and no mitigation!"

"Oh! pillaleu!" exclaimed the poor old woman—the Broohy's wife—quite distressed, and bursting into tears, "why should we get seven years for nothing at all?"

"Twill be a lesson to you, my old haridan," said the *sigh*; "it will be a lesson to you, you old *ownsha.†* Nothing would do you but to kick football! It well becomes an old hussey like you to run after a ball like a *3eapleac,‡* does it not? A skinny old granny like you, that ought to be making her soul,"—and he put his face quite close to hers,—"nothing would do you but to go skelping after the ball like a *3eapreac.§* Now mind, silence is the rule in this place. Do not think it is in *Eire* you are, where you could say what you like. No talking is allowed in this place. If you open your mouth while at your work, you will get three days' bread and water, and fifteen days' penal class. It is for your own good I am speaking. I must do my duty. I'll bring you before the chief."

"What work shall we have to do?" asked the Broohy.

"The women must knit, and the men square stones in the quarry. That is the work you will have to do; and you had better do it, I can tell you. If you do not, your hands will be chained behind your back, and you'll have to eat your food like a beast, with your belly on the ground. Now, mind."

The poor Broohy and his family were placed at their work in two distinct places—the men in the open air, the women in a subterraneous apartment—under the rigor-

* *Gob*, the mouth.

† *Ownsha*, a fool.

‡ *3eapleac*, a boy.

§ *3eapreac*, a girl.

ous guardianship of stern and severe *sighs*. One day, when time had effaced the impression made on the mind of the Broohy by the wise advice of the *sigh* who had captured him, and when familiarity with his new abode rendered him comparatively indifferent to its terrors, he took a solitary walk along a *bohár*, or road, which wound through the heart of the territory. On this road he met a *bohárpe* * driving two oxen. One of these oxen was lean, weak, and emaciated; while the other was fat, strong, massive, and brawny. To the surprise and indignation of the Broohy, the driver belaboured the feeble and sickly ox with a ponderous cudgel, shod with iron rings, while he allowed the strong and healthy bullock to loiter along, and ramble in pursuit of grass here and there, as it pleased. For some time the Broohy regarded this strange proceeding with silent rage. The wanton barbarity of the savage driver, however, ultimately infuriated him so excessively, that he lost all patience, and exclaimed, "Ah! what are you doing, man? Why do you beat that poor ox in so brutal a way? I never in my life saw such cruelty! You ought to be cudgelled yourself, instead of the ox."

These words had hardly issued from the Broohy's lips, when the long-necked *sigh* was by his side. He seized the Broohy, and dragged him along in a rude and merciless manner; for, according to the rules of the *τῆρ*, this was a most unpardonable crime. All the districts in that subaqueous country were moved and scandalized by the heinous enormity of the Broohy's offence. The alarmed babble of the affrighted inhabitants, scared at the magnitude of the crime, smote the poor Broohy's ears, and filled him with affliction, as he moved along in the custody of the silent *sigh*, who could hardly restrain the rage with which he was boiling over. The Broohy's heart beat audibly against his ribs, as he saw the alarmed inhabitants flocking round to gaze at him, with consternation in their countenances, as if appalled at his culpability. No language can paint the melancholy expression of the Broohy's countenance, or the torture of soul which he experienced, as he proceeded to the judgment-seat, where he was

* A pedestrian.

arraigned before the dark ruler—the *sigh*, who governed that country. To the astonishment of the Broohy, who could hardly believe his eyes, this dark ruler was no other than the conjurer. He was seated on a dark throne, or chair of state, and near him at the cow-boy, whom the conjurer had released. The *sigh* with the long neck stood before the black throne, and stated the offence of the Broohy in breaking the rules of the $\tau\eta\eta$. When the dark ruler had heard him, and the long-necked *sigh* was silent, the cow-boy, who was a *sigh* himself, stood up and related several instances of kindness, and benevolence, and genuine goodness which he, a *sigh*, had experienced at the hands of the Broohy's daughter, when in his service, at which the dark ruler was so pleased, that he said,—

“For the sake of the daughter I shall pardon the whole family. She merits honey in her stirabout.”

They immediately found themselves transported—they could not tell how—into their old farm-house, where their cows were lowing around them, as if asking to be milked. There they lived happily during the rest of their lives; and if they did not, that you and I may.

When the *vanithee* had concluded her story, our heroine thanked her repeatedly, declaring it the best story she had ever heard. In the $\mu\alpha\tau\eta$ of the *vanithee* she remained for some time, at the end of which, she was kindly invited to visit the *dune* of O'Byrne, the chief of this romantic and beautiful country.

* * * * *

CHAPTER XLIII.

“Then our silken-robed minstrels, a silver-haired band,
Shall awake the young slumbering blood of the land;
And the gates of our chieftains again shall stand wide,
And the smile of their welcome woo all withinside.”

From the Irish.

As our heroine approached the castle of the O'Byrne,—
embosomed in dark woods, and seated in the wide sweep of

a park,—she perceived that it was strongly fortified, and girt by massive battlements and turrets, with the *mermaid* flag waving over the keep. As she ran her eye over its expanse and length, the broad sunshine seemed to pause lingeringly on its gray lofty turrets with a fond delay, reluctant to relinquish the fair castle. The gallowglasses who paced the walls were, she perceived, covered with polished mail, and armed with two-handed swords which flashed like silver on the towers. She could hear the sound of the *stuit*, blended with the notes of the *pibroch*, playing a welcome to her coming. On entering the outer gate of the castle she found herself in an outer ballium, where there was a mound of earth to command any distant work of besiegers. This ballium was separated by a strong wall and towered gate from the inner ballium, where were the houses and barracks for the garrison, the chapel, stables, and hospital, within which, in one corner of it, stood the keep, or donjon, a square tower flanked by smaller turrets. This keep was to O'Byrne's fortress what the citadel or castle of Dublin was to the city—the last retreat of the garrison. The form of the castle was quadrangular,—a double moat skirted it on one side, and its immense draw-bridge was commanded and defended by a frowning barbican. At the southern corners rose battlemented towers, massive and lofty, from the brow of which, on the approach of an enemy, the red beacon-fires silently blazed to the night sky, as a lurid signal to gather the hurried kerns and hasty gallowglasses—billeted, or *bonaghted*, in distant farm-houses—to its defence. A strong curtain-wall swept round the outer court, pierced by a pointed archway that gave admittance to the inner quadrangle, dotted on all sides with narrow lance-like windows, and three wide arched doorways. It contained many winding staircases, mural chambers, and a long warder's gallery.

"More and more welcome to you, my lady, *Kayd milliya fawlltha*," was vociferated from a hundred throats, as the ponderous gates closed behind our heroine, and the *vanreean* or chieftainess, with a smile, said,—“The O'Byrne greets you well;” and taking her cordially by the hand, led her to *a proud and fierce-looking man*, with a resolute expression of countenance, whose words—strangely at variance with

his appearance—were kind, tender, and soothing as those of a mother. His person was raw-boned, and his complexion black. This was the chief of the O'Byrnes.

By the chieftainess our heroine was led into the hall. On entering this hall—of which the floor was strewn with rushes—our heroine found herself under a wooden roof, sharp and high, consisting of massive rafters and cross timbers of oak, richly ornamented and hung with “curved swords of battle,”* and glittering with innumerable “shields, with the brightness of the sun,”† “completely beautiful coats of mail,” &c.; while “mantles of deep purple,” and “tunics with gold ornaments,” were hanging on the walls. In the centre of the unceiled roof gaped the *Louvre*, and under the louvre roared a fire in a great fireplace, which diffused its warmth through the whole apartment. A hundred guests could warm themselves at O'Byrne's hearth, owing to its central situation. From the logs blazing on the andirons rose a thin white column of smoke to the half chimney, or louvre, by which it vanished into the external air. Few of the inconveniences which coal would occasion resulted from this smoke, as the fuel was wood; and, surrounded as it was by the glittering shields and the broad-swords which gleamed on all sides, it had even a grand appearance. The hall was crowded with guests, bearded men and fair women; and a score of harps, perched in the music gallery over the entrance, made the wooden roof ring to the chanted glories of Branduff, the founder of the O'Byrne's clan. O'Byrne's hall abounded with mead, and drinking-horns, and “ale and music”—was constantly overflowing with the *dhinna uasul*,—

“Throngs of chiefs and warriors bold,”

the young and handsome swordsmen of the O'Kavanas, O'Thewles, and O'Moores, who crowded “the tapestried halls of this plentiful castle,”—for every one who was in the slightest degree remarkable for poetic spirit, courteous manners, gentle birth, or the love of song, was welcome to “the music-loving lord of the O'Byrnes.”

The house of O'Byrne—like all Irish houses—swarmed

* *Vide* *Beabhan na hEagart*, page 57.

† *Idem*, pages 113 and 87.

with Irish *mimi* (a species of comic actors), claurshoers (harpers), tympanours (tabourers), crowthers (the earliest violin-players), kerraghers (players at chess or tables), "rymours," skallys (raconteurs, or tale-tellers); bards and others in vary-coloured costumes,—purple plaids, scarlet tunics, and well-frilled surplices, their curling locks clustering on their broad shoulders, and round their smiling faces. The nobles of the Pale were content with baronial state,—the Irish chiefs aimed at kingly magnificence. They deemed themselves not lords, but monarchs; and as evidences of royal rank, they kept as their retainers, not only soldiers, but men of letters: the gilded jacks of the former—their skull-caps waving with tassels—were to be seen on every hand, their bearded faces and great swords, which, when sheathed, resembled those of the ancient Romans, having an imposing, picturesque, and gallant effect.

As she trod timidly through the hall, our heroine felt instinctively—something in a voiceless whisper told her—that these O'Byrnes, whose eyes were fixed upon her, were a terrible people, that under their ceremonious and exterior politeness was deeply concealed dark and fierce passions. She read, in the eagle eyes of the crested and ringletted figures, that fierce pride, and fiercer hate, were slumbering—if, indeed, they did slumber—in those bosoms, and that a beck would hurl them in a tempest of fire at their victims. In the proud eyes of the chieftainess she could descry the intense pride of ancient ancestry and strong resolve. The arms of this chieftainess glittered with polished gold;* her neck, too, was loaded with strings and amulets of pearl and gold: she carried, in short, a moderate fortune about her person, while her robes and train were comparatively simple and plain, as if she despised the textile tissues which any boor might purchase. One of her bracelets was worth a score of her robes. Her scorn of brilliant tissues, and preference of a few massive ornaments, revealed a heart proud as Lucifer,—but proud with a pride too strongly established to be discourteous; it only lent dignity to her demeanour.

The most singular object in the hall was a large vase, or

* See *Campion*,

cooler. It was made of brass, embossed with figures in relief, and filled with liquor ready for distribution by the cup-bearers.* She was surprised, however, and almost shocked, to perceive that poets who played the harp were seated at the chess-boards with knights who bore the sword, and that there was no difference whatever in the height of the tables in the hall.

On the entrance of our heroine—the “Light of Beauty”—the guests were being marshalled according to their rank by the heedful and respectful stewards. The venison and ptarmigan, the sirloin and capon, mountains of meat borne in by long lines of servants, soon burdened the board; and having received the benison of a friar, were yielding to the executive blades of the busy *parrocs*, or pages. *Here*, hoary warriors were quaffing their bowls, laughing loud and hoarsely, and talking, if possible, still louder. *There*, bold-looking *uasuls* were whispering young ladies, who smiled in reply, and trifled with their meal. Overhead, the hooded hawks, perched on the massive cross-beams of the hall, were flapping their wings, and shaking their bells, and screaming, and whistling; while the pipers in the gallery made the walls ring around them, and the enormous hounds, white as milk, bayed at the birds. Round went the wine-flasks, and all was noise, clatter, mirth, and revelry,—when suddenly the voice of O’Byrne was heard above the din, and all became silent.

CHAPTER XLIV.

“Ye dark-hair’d youths, and elders hoary,
List to the wandering *scally’s* song.”—E. WALSH.

ON her appearance in the hall, the Light of Beauty had been welcomed with a gentle clapping of hands, which filled her with confusion, whereupon several ladies crowded round her, to procure her a comfortable seat; and with

* *Hardiman’s Irish Deeds*. Morewood, page 613.

concern in their faces, and soothing expressions on their lips, pressed her to partake of viands with which the active and respectful *šjollarða-copar*, or cup-bearers, covered the board before her. The ladies endeavoured to make her feel herself at home, with pleasant conversation and short stories.* They were nearly all (she was surprised to learn) cousins—their grandfather having had fifty-three grandchildren, the greater part of whom were now in the hall. The board was furnished with wine and sweetmeats, honey and spices, bread, salmon, and fruits, and, indeed, viands of every kind, in puzzling profusion. After partaking of some of these refreshments, she rose from a light repast, and, having intimated a wish for repose, she was led to her small bed-room, in which was a narrow arched window that looked out upon the lawn. "From this moment," said the chieftainess, on parting with her for the night, "you are never to know me or O'Byrne as owners of this house. You must always consider us, my love, as simply guests. This poor chamber, my dear," said the chieftainess, "you will consider as altogether your own. This is your fortress. No one in the world shall intrude upon you here. In this house you may command quite as absolutely, my love, as in your own castle. You may breakfast, dine, and sup here whenever you please, and invite such of my guests to accompany you as may be most agreeable to you."

Before she could retire to her pallet, a daughter of the O'Byrne came into her apartment with a gilt cup overflowing with a liqueur, rich with toasted sugar, and fragrant with spices. It was, she said, specially prepared for her, and was strongly recommended by the *leij*, or leech, and the chieftainess, containing, as it did, anise seed and caraway seed, cloves, coriander, and saffron. The stranger was informed by the young and blooming chatelaine, her cup-bearer, as a great secret, that nothing could be more grateful to her father and the whole clan of the O'Byrnes, than that she should live happily under the chief's roof, and according to her own inclination—so far as that poor castle would admit of her doing so—live without the

* See Morewood's *History of Spirituous Liquors*, page 612.

least restraint. There were twenty choice horses in the stables, and ample provision for such as delighted in rural sports; and as the house was open at all times for the reception of chivalric company, there was always some amusement or other going forward. There was, at least, dancing indoors, and hunting out of doors. There were falcons on the perch which would delight her. She herself had such a dear bold goshawk—so spirited, and yet so gentle, it would not fear a lion, and yet it would come down from the very clouds at a beck. She should make her a present of it. The principal ollamh of the country was so interested by her beauty, and evident tenderness, and sadness, that he had in the hall already composed a poem to cheer and console her. He should present it to her in the morning. It began with the words—'twas all she remembered of it,—

"Since morning's rosy smile of light
Laughs away the tears of night,
Banish from that breast of snow
The spectre-grief that haunts it so.

"Fleeting though the moments be,
Every fleeting hour we measure
Is fraught with honey, like the bee,
Could we but improve its treasure."

That was all she remembered. She feared that her apartment was unpleasantly situated, as it looked out upon the yard which was frequented by the kernes. She led her to the window, where the stranger could see at a distance the brawny gallowglasses and kernes grouped around enormous fires, which roared and crackled with flagrant fury. The kernes were smoothing the shafts of their javelins, and whetting their swords, and the gallowglasses polishing their mail, while shouts of laughter and the strains of the bagpipe, and large methers of foaming ale, attested the happiness of the rough rascals. While she was timidly contemplating the ruffians, the fellows bellowed a shout on the appearance of a bevy of wenches, threw aside their weapons with a loud "aboo," and caught the laughing abigails round the waist; and after a kiss and a scream, linked hand-in-hand with the females, the band danced

round the blazing fires, while the bagpipes screamed or played with vigour. While glancing at this scene, the young chatelaine recited a poem descriptive of her castle and country, of which the following is a prose translation:—

“In the vales of the O’Byrnes you might see the sons of princes contesting the race, or arranging the manly sport, or driving with shouts the flying deer. There the courser, stimulated by the trumpet, and backed by a dexterous rider, gave his fierce spirit to the contest in the stirring wager of battle, while the hilt of the sword scorched the palm of the knight. There the bright mail of the warrior was seen lying near the pallet on which the hero slumbered. There, in the light of the rising moon, the shield might be seen gleaming on the warrior’s back, the hilt glistening at his side, while the hoar-frost bound the swordsman’s locks. There the burning anger of the martial heart is cooled in knightly battle, while the warrior returns the sword-thrust, or hurls the spear at his challenger. There the castles are filled with poets, who sing the pleasures of love and war. There banners are dancing in the wind, and the heels of the spears press the shoulders of the steeds; while chiefs and *oosuls* ride forth, richly armed. There the chief is a burning brand, inextinguishable in battle: a champion of renown, and a vindicator of the valour of the Gaels; the star of every conflict which the province of the spears may wage against the city of the swords, and specially irresistible when forcing his way through the ‘gap of danger.’”

The kitchen, containing a range of great pans, “that could each boil three beeves at once,” was, owing to the roaring conflagration of timber necessary for such cookery, arranged in the open air, and visible from the window. The process of cooking never ceased in O’Byrne’s castle; and we may here repeat, that though the art of cookery has risen to the dignity of a science, it is very certain that it never in modern times produces anything so grateful to the palate as that soup which was yielded by the process of stewing three whole beeves in one cauldron. The flavour which that soup possessed cannot be derived from what the Irish would term *scrapeens* of meat,—the flavour

seemed to give a new vitality to the heart of the bibber which moderns never experience; and sociality and unbounded hospitality received its own reward in the rich flavour of oxen roasted whole, or boiled without being minced. "There are," she added in a low voice, and with a slight blush, "certain very handsome young gentlemen in the castle at this moment, full of gallantry, courtesy, and gaiety, who can dance enchantingly, and sing divinely! They give jewels to the minstrels as if they were shards. It is delightful to hear them recite a poem in honour of one's poor eyes and lips. They are always making love and verses. If you but knew them! But see how I talk. Foolish girl! I only make you sad; and you too, too sad already! I shall leave you now to repose, and to-morrow we shall meet. *Bannah lath.*"

With these words, after kissing the stranger with the apparent tenderness of a sister, she was departing, when the latter observed,—“Your beauty must be the theme of many songs.”

“Well, I think,” replied the young chatelaine, smiling, and reddening, “that the poets have composed about five hundred verses in praise of these poor eyes, and two hundred, or so, in praise of my lips and cheeks, which comes to about seven hundred in all, as far as I can reckon.”

“You must be very proud.”

“It is impossible to be proud,” said Madeleine Ny Byrne, angrily, “when one sees the daughter of that base churl—that common fellow, birthless and nameless, who never had an ancestry—the Earl of Kildare—extolled in eleven hundred songs.* But,” she added—“but you yourself, doubtless, have been well berhymed?”

“No,” answered the stranger; “my people punish and banish the poets, harpers, rhymers, chroniclers, bards, and isshalyn.”†

“Oh! that is very barbarous; and why, for heaven’s sake?”

“I have heard my father say that they commonly go with praises to gentlemen of the Pale, praising in rhymes

* See the *Munster Poets*, published by O’Daly, Anglesea Street.

† Vide Letter from Robert Cowley, in 1537, *State Papers*.

their extortions, robberies, and abuses, as acts of valiantness, which rejoices and encourages them in doing evil."

The eyes of the mountain lady flashed at this horrible profanity! but her courtesy mastered her indignation, and she said, in a tone of assumed jest, though it was easy to discern that she was profoundly convinced of the truth of her words, "Oh! young lady, you must unlearn these sordid ideas of the clowns of Fingal. In our mountains we deem nothing so precious as literature, whether it be fact or fiction, history or romance, ballad or chronicle. In short, we revere our poets more than our priests. We regard the pleasures of the mind as more noble, pure, and gratifying than any other pleasures whatever. Literature we believe to be the most beautiful, the most instructive, and the most captivating of all things; and if enlightened, gilded, and exemplified by the imagination, its dominion and delightfulness, we hold, are *magical*;" then, after a pause, "But are there no poets in the English language?"

"There is one."

"What is his name?" asked Madeleine Ny Byrne.

"Chaucer."

"Tell me something about Chaucer."

The young lady of the Pale proceeded to narrate the subject of the *Canterbury Tales*, in a sketch which the young mountaineer listened to with profound interest.

"He shall be translated into Irish," said the beautiful Madeleine, when the sketch was concluded—kindling with that literary enthusiasm which was then so common in her impulsive and impressionable tribe. "But how did Chaucer become so excellent a poet, though native to England, where the muses be ever dumb?"

"He spent several years in Italy," was the answer.

"In Italy! Oh! we have in this house several translations into Irish from the Italian: such as the *Travels of Marco Polo*, and Turpin's *Romance of Charlemagne*. We have likewise a French romance, translated into Irish, and entitled *Guy de Warwick et la Belle Fille Felias*.* It fills forty-nine pages. We have also a delightful romance, *The Life and Adventures of Bevy's of Hampton*, and of his

* These Irish versions of foreign books are fast decaying in Trinity College, Dublin

fair bride, the daughter of the King of Scotland, and her elopement with the young Emperor of Germany, and subsequent adventurers. You shall see them to-morrow, if you will. It is delightful to read our own poets too," she continued; "they gratify the imagination and the intellect so intensely—their brilliant fictions about fairy land, or *tír na-n-oge*, the clime of perennial youth, where Ossian passed two hundred years in the bowers of the fairy queen, and deemed it, from its pleasures, but a day! It is enchanting to taste the charms of our poetry, which exults with the fiercest passions of war, and languishes with the most tender sentiments of affection—burns with the vehemence of the chivalric heart, and weeps with the pathos of tragic sorrow. By turns, noble and grand! voluptuous and romantic! My grandfather never marched to war, or travelled in peace, without a hundred men of science in his train,—antiquarians, poets, romancers, historians, physicians, and brehons. Study, books, and men of letters, almost entirely and exclusively occupied his time."

"Is this passion for poetry peculiar to the O'Byrnes?" asked the stranger.

"Oh, no! The O'Moores, O'Thewles, and O'Kavanas, rival one another in their passionate devotion to literature and poetry, and in the extent of their libraries. O'Thewle has acquired a glorious name by the protection he has afforded to letters; and the eloquence of the O'Moores, the beauty of their language, the measured harmony of their discourses, crowds their churches, and makes their priests wonderfully renowned. They unite the charms of poetry with the energy of prose."

Our heroine hung down her head, and blushed for her own country—the English Pale—which, she secretly admitted, was plunged in the most disgraceful ignorance.

We may here observe, that the greatest difficulty which was experienced in the intercourse between the native Irish and the Knights of the Pale, consisted in the fact, that men of letters, antiquarians, poets, historians, &c., were scorned by the fastidious and contemptuous Palemen, as mere jugglers or tumblers might be; while the native chiefs would proudly persist in seating these very men of letters at their own tables, and treating the gowned

authors as perfectly equal, if not superior, to knights and gentlemen. The English would not suffer literary men at the same table with themselves; they invariably set them down at a separate table, insisting that literary men should mess apart and together.* Knowing this, Madeleine endeavoured, by expressing a passion for literature, which she sincerely felt, to render the fair Fingallian tolerant of poetry and poets—a tolerance without which she knew it would be impossible to live in the country of the O'Byrnes, which, like every Irish clan-ground, might be regarded as an academy of literature and history.

"I have heard my father say, with reference to the bards of the mountains," observed the stranger, "that they seldom chose unto themselves the doings of good men for the arguments of their poems; but whomsoever they found to be most licentious of life—most bold and lawless in his doings—most dangerous and desperate in all parts of disobedience and rebellious disposition; him they set up and glorified in their rhymes—him they praised to the people, and to young men made an example to follow."†

Madeleine grew pale on hearing this. She was silent and thoughtful for several seconds. "For heaven's sake, my dear," exclaimed Madeleine, in a low, earnest tone, "let me beseech you not to exhibit the slightest disrespect for poetry or the poets, or, indeed, for literature of any kind, while you dwell among these poor hills. The pride and sensitiveness of that class is no less extraordinary than their vindictiveness is dreadful. They'd rhyme you to death, my dear—at least bring out blotches all over your face by poisonous rhymes.‡ It is easy to irritate them to fury, but they are very slow to pardon; so, for God's sake, never say so much of them as you have said to me to-night. It would be considered as sacrilege. They are supreme in these mountains. The arch-chief on his throne, the priest in his vestments, and the beggar in the *bawn*, dread their stinging verses, and tremble at their keen malignity. You might as well be dead as lampooned by one of those proud and irritable men. Give them fair words. Be very courteous to them."

* *Froissart*.

† See Tribes of Ireland.

"Are their poems invariably satirical?" asked our heroine, while alarm paled her countenance.

"Oh! by no means."

"What are their subjects?"

"They are various,—such as feasts and adventures, elopements and sieges, martial rapine, battles and voyages, amours, plundering expeditions, and tragic incidents. Every arch-poet is bound to have seven times fifty capital romances, and twice that number of inferior tales, ready to repeat to princes and chieftains. My father has recently offered sixty beeves of the vale for a poem such as his bard will publicly repeat to-morrow, encircled by the lords of our country."

"Who are they, pray?"

"The marshal of this principality—the standard-bearer of the O'Byrnes—the maor of the clan—the arch-physician of our race—the *neul tpaioic*, or astrologer—the *beataíje* of the O'Byrnes. You may know those nobles by their party-coloured costume. Amongst our people plebeians and common soldiers wear but a single colour, military officers of an inferior rank wear only two colours, commanders of battalions wear three, beatties four, nobles and knights five, bards and physicians six, princes seven."

"What are those seven hues?"

"The braccan my father wears is composed of red, blue, purple, brown, yellow, white and green. Here it is," she continued, unfolding from her shoulders a scarf, which was radiant with tints beautifully intermixed, and tastefully collated, so as to give effect one colour to another.

Before the young chieftainess had bidden our heroine a last good-night, a crone, gray and feeble, tottered into her apartment, and with a genuflexion and a blessing on the young Fingallian—as she termed our heroine—took her seat beside the bed. It was her extraordinary task to do what modern novelists find lamentably easy—to superinduce sleep by a prose narrative. So soon as the young stranger was at rest, the hag, in spite of the reluctance of the former to put her to such a task, began a rambling tale in a monotonous drumming undertone, about *a dwarf and a giant*, which she never gave up for a second

during the whole night. Whenever the stranger awoke, she still heard her going on in the same drowsy tone. It certainly had the gratifying effect of banishing the sense of loneliness, dulling painful thought, appeasing the desolation within, and promoting slumber.

CHAPTER XLV.

"Thus, still let song attend
Woman's bright way;
Thus, still let woman lend
Light to the lay.

"Like stars through heaven's sea,
Floating in harmony,
Beauty shall glide along,
Circled in song.

"When thou art nigh, it seems
A new creation round—
The sun hath fairer beams,
The lute a softer sound.

"Tho' thee alone I see,
And hear alone thy sigh!
'Tis light, 'tis song to me!
'Tis all when thou art by!"—MOORE.

"Neque enim celestia tingi
Ora decet lacrymis."—OVID.

WHEN it was communicated to the chief of the O'Byrnes that the lovely stranger, Maude Barnewell, had appeared in the recent tournament in Dublin as *reine d'amour*, he declared that if she had worn the crown of beauty in the plains, she should wear the crown of poesy in his dales. For this purpose O'Byrne caused a *congress of the poets*, or "congress of the poets," to be proclaimed by a *herald*, throughout all the foldings of those famous hills. As the seat of an assembly of poets, the O'Byrnes chose some grassy hill, o'ercanopied by the visible majesty of the wide blue shell of the sky. They always selected a scene of natural beauty, which the

Architect of the universe seemed to have expressly decked, and set off for the assemblage of beautiful women and brave men. Such was the case in the present instance. The sturdy clan poured its brawny swarms into a spot which was seated amid a landscape of rich verdure, clear waters, and fair wild flowers; where the small birds were chattering like busy gossips in the boughs, while the solitary eagle was soaring in the azure arch of the serene sky. At one side was a green slope clothed in wood, with tree rising above tree, like an amphitheatre; at another was a wild torrent, like a streak of snow, scarring the mountain's breast with a baldrick of foam. 'Twas like enchantment! Amid this scene—for the accommodation of the “queen of poesy”—“that gentle lady,” as the poets termed her, “whose sunny smile and serene loveliness caused the apple trees to bend with rosy fruit”—a throne, covered with cloth of gold, was constructed and canopied over with a bower of green wicker work, richly wreathed with festoons of bright flowers. The prizes of the festival were three noble steeds, each held by an officer, named *ḡolla-éich*, and three torques of gold, each borne by an officer named *ḡolla-ḡaḡa*. The competitors—the poets, who had flocked thither from all quarters—were attired in long robes of green, blended with auburn. They had, unlike their countrymen, no arms, save “poets’ wands,” and were individually attended by a long train of *ḡollaḡa-ḡaḡa*, pages or lacqueys. O’Byrne was present at this scene with his *beaḡ-ḡaḡa*, or consort; and the Lord Brehon, his standard-bearer or marshal; the “keeper of arms and dresses;” the champions, heralds, or “proclaimers of battle;” the guardian of treasures and hostages; the master of the banquets, physicians, romancers; lord-keeper of the “chess tables, cups, rings, gold, and silver;” the master of the hounds; supervisors of rivers and flocks; the keeper of the steeds, and many other officers of a subordinate character, who encircled their chief. The moment our heroine took her seat, the whole valley became vocal,—a burst of choral symphony rose from the musicians, who “struck their stringed instruments with the tops, sides, and nails of their fingers.”

In this choral hymn her eyes were compared to the

sunbeams on a frosty day, radiant but chaste—and the crimson of her lips to the berry of the caoptan—her glowing cheek was like the blossom of the apple tree; while her figure “was tall and majestic as the pine of the mountain of horses.” The Queen of Poesy, who appeared in the middle of this festival, was crowned, so to say, with an Irish turban, or wreath of snow-white tissue, covering her brows; her long luxuriant tresses hung down at each side of her amiable face—a silk mantle, secured by an elaborate brooch, of curious shape and pattern, sheathed her faultless form, under which was seen a gown laced on the breast, and composed of cloth of gold. It was a striking scene which met the eye of our heroine from the summit of her throne. A crowd of proud and warlike men, fierce and bearded, draped in picturesque garments, with keen eyes and brown mustachios, were recumbent on the grass—young, sinewy, and athletic—swift as stags, and strong as bulls. Some were grouped round the throne of our heroine. The ground was covered with the dalesmen in every direction. Many a feeble graybeard, with skinny fingers, turned the pages of the poets which lay upon his lap—the furrows of age on his brow, and the snows of time on his head, while encircled by spearmen and axemen, in the smiling vigour and stately pride of generous manhood.

The first of the bards who rose to recite a poem was a clever, modest youth, with a head of black hair flowing in ringlets round his settled countenance; “deeper than the red rose was the bloom of his cheek.” His lips, we are told, “were more red than the berry of the mountain ash; more blue than the bugle was his eye; while his voice was sweeter than the strings of a well-tuned harp.” He wore a four-cornered purple mantle, thrown carelessly over his shoulders; and he had a fine stringed harp, ornamented with jewels, between his hands. The bard rose, as we said, and the clansmen, who had been sitting on the grass previously, crowded together to hear him. The bard allowed the clanking of their arms and the din of their feet to subside before he uttered a word. He then repeated a poem that, from its beauty of language and elevation of sentiment, struck Maude Barnewell with

amazement. But there are numbers of the native Irish, even at this day, capable of composing extemporaneous eulogiums and poems of considerable length (upon any subject), surprisingly elegant, and full of fine sentiment. In short, Ireland had its Moores and its Davises, its Goldsmiths, and its Sheridans, &c., in that day, as in more recent times.

When seated among his bards and brehons, in the midst of those graceful mountains, O'Byrne was in his greatest majesty, where the fleecy clouds sailing in the azure vault above him were chequered by gleams of golden sunshine, while the mountain forests were sighing to the solemn winds.

Of the prizes to be bestowed by the Queen of Poesy on the most successful bards, some consisted of golden ornaments, made expressly to be given away. They somewhat resembled in shape the handle of a drawer, but at either extremity, expanded into a flower or cup of gold. In addition to these, she was furnished with torques for the neck, which were formed of strands of gold twisted together like the strands of a rope. The purity of the metal was proved by this complexity; for if the gold were adulterated, it would lose the ductility which enabled the artificer to wreathe it into this contorted form.

The Lord Brehon described the next prize. Taking a roll of vellum from his *golla*, or page, the Lord Brehon read as follows:—"The principal prize of poetry is a caparisoned horse—a charger fit for battle. This horse, according to the just, wise, and salutary laws of Felimy, which I hold in my hand, must be large, sound, young, noble, high-headed, powerful, spirited, broad-breasted, haughty, easy-bearing, sleek, slender-legged, well-descended, free from spear thrusts, free from sword cuts, his chest well-set, tractable to the hand, without flags on his back, not rough-stepping, not too low, not too high, not shy, not starting, not big-mouthed, not ill-stepping, not lazy, not lame, not kicking, not dusty-haired, not puffing, not droop-eared, not shaky, easy-ridden, obedient. It is for the candidates," continued the Brehon, "to see that the horse in question answers this description. There he is. Let the candidates examine him."

When this examination was over, O'Byrne addressed one of the poets, or *pleach*.

"Well, M'Liag," said O'Byrne, "how likest thou Ultonia? Be the woods green in Leath Cuin? Did they give you anything, M'Liag?" asked the chief.

"Assuredly they did. To the lords of Tyrone I am truly grateful," answered the bard.

"But to whom most grateful, my friend?"

"To Donald Macduff," replied the minstrel.

"Donald Macduff is generous. Yet I wish to know what the north men gave you, M'Liag?"

"This is it," answered the minstrel. "When I entered the plain of Moyrath, I saw a noble procession, at the head of which appeared O'Neil and Lady Sabia, who had been informed of my coming. I and my attendants were borne with shouts of transport on men's shoulders into the O'Neil's castle, or Dune, and a suit of clothes, a chain, and a mantle were presented to each of my followers. As for myself, O'Neil gave me his war horse and his polished coat of mail, with his chessboard and chessmen, and three-score beeves, and, in addition, a horse and gold ring were given to each of my minstrels.

"And Donald Macduff, M'Liag, what did you receive from him?"

"Merely a girdle."

"And yet you are *most* thankful to Macduff?"

"Truly so I am, and so I ought; for it was harder for him to bestow a trifling girdle, than to O'Neil to impart the greatest treasure."

"That is a shrewd saying. Well, we shall give you more than O'Neil."

The great business of the day proceeded in the following manner:—An attendant of the poet's, termed his *macaire*, or elocutionist, prepared to chant the following poem, much in the way in which the opera is chanted in Italian theatres. His voice was a fine deep baritone, and the effect of the words, which were full of fire, blended with the passion of the *macaire*, was powerful and electrifying. He had committed the poem to memory, and with the fire of the bard he immixed a rapture of his own, precisely as the heroic sentiments of Corneille, on the lips of a Talma, blend

the inspiration of the great tragedian with the enthusiasm of the actor. This combination of two distinct kinds of talent—one improving the effect of the other—made a deep impression on the audience, who, with their eyes on the earth, listened with mute, impassioned, and serious attention. While his *pacajje* was chanting the noble words of M'Liag, seven of his train—musicians by profession—struck the cords of their harps to the cadences of the recitation, and thus enriched the harmony of the rhyme with the silvery music of the Irish lyre: they were the orchestra of this performance. You might fancy, as you listened to them, that you heard the shout of battle, the clash of swords, the obstreperous out roar of victory, or the deep echo of the hills resounding with the music of three thousand hounds. M'Liag did not profess to have written the following poem. No; it was composed by Ossian, the son of Fionn. M'Liag had merely found the "staves" on which it was written, and modernized the language—a kind of pardonable forgery or fiction, to be found in the literature of every nation:—

"Fionn was ruler of the chase,
And Allen was our gathering place;
And I was young, and strong, and gay,
Though old and sad, and weak to-day.

"Three thousand hounds, all staunch and truc,
All fleet, and loud, and fair to view,
We led, to scour from Curil's dell,
A bestial demon, fierce and fell.

"Upon the mountain's western face
We, Fians, waited for the chase,
When out the snorting savage bounds,
And terror scared our quailing hounds.

"Fierce, tall, and brutish, black, and grim,
It scared the brave to gaze on him,—
A sight so foul was never seen,
Though far our knightly band had been.

"The shaggy savage grinned for spite,
And gnashed his teeth, like sword-blades bright;
Full lofty towered his mighty size,
With horrid lightnings in his eyes.

"And swarming from their tarrying place,
The dogs with terror viewed the chase,
Who poured aloud his thrilling cries,
And hate and danger in his eyes."

"Pausing, he scanned the clamorous hounds,
All gathering from their tarrying grounds;
Then, like the wind, the savage fled,
Fast-winged, and wild with doubt and dread.

"Mac Morny from his eash of gold
Let slip his stag-hounds, fleet and bold;
Then brave Mac Lee his leash withdrew,
And with a scream the fierce hound flew.

"Bold Roigney next, with eye of blue,
Let loose two wolf-dogs, strong and true.
Ullin was seen with haste to free
His Fuad fleet and bold Lonnee.

"Forth from his dog-chain, with a bound,
O'Divny alipt his restive hound.
From his right hand, both strong and true,
Good Oscar loosed his staunch hound too.

"Then might you see, had you been there,
On that wild-wooded slope so fair—
Then should you see the mighty Finn
Let loose his stag-hound, Beeran Binn.

"And then—though weak and old to-day—
I gave my wolf-hound to the fray;
And Faolan, too, the son of Finn,
Let loose his sleuth-hound, *Ree na rinn*.

"And clamouring round that haunted hill,
Three thousand hounds were yelling shrill;
And then our shout filled all the sky,
While echo gave us back the cry.

"The struggling mandog might be seen
At bay, amid the thickets green,
Trampling the hounds that round him press,
In horrid rage, and wild distress.

"Three hundred hounds, all staunch and true,
That wild and struggling monster slew;
While of our knights and warrior men,
Full three times fifty strewed the glen.

"Out spoke Mac Cual with kingly grace,
For he was ruler of the chase,
'Knights of the Fenian Brotherhood,
Advance, avenge a comrade's blood!'

"Entering the grotto of the glen,
His princely sons bespoke us then,—
'Here lurk the race who wrong us still,
The caverned genii of the hill.'

"Within that cave their *sgeens** they drew,
Those sons of Finn, the frank and true.
The genii warriors, aly and bold,
Assailed them fiercely in that hold.

"Six hundred men—no dastards they—
The warlike genii slew that day;
For three battalions joined our fight,
And every man a Fenian knight.

"Set by Mac Cual, the brave and strong,
The battle raged, fierce, loud, and long;
Routing them still, they still returned,
And three long days the battle burned."

"Fain would I hear, thou man of might!
Some gallant deed of Fenian knight;
Some single thrust, some mighty blow,
That laid the hideous monster low."

"Sir priest, it was no human blow
That laid the gasping mandog low;
Though rent to flakes—a corpse ere night—
Long, fierce, and stubborn, was his fight.

"His masters mark an elfin streak
Distained the monster's hideous cheek;
The genii sealed him as their own—
His might was in their mark alone.

"O Patrick of the sweet-toned bell!
No knight could kill that mandog fell;
Till Finn, his wolf-dog in his hand,
Rallied and led our scattered band.

"With three fierce heroes from the sea
He bared his blade of victory,
And rushed upon that monster dire,
Still flashing threats with eyes of fire.

"Then, rising from its grassy bed,
Bran often shook its mighty head,
Drew off the socks that sheathed its feet,
And golden chain of Bran the fleet.

"When Finn's fierce, fast, tremendous hound
Rushed at this *Arracht* with a bound,
It rent and tugged the monster long,
And by the jaw it clutched him strong.

"The dog ne'er loosed that clutch of death,
But growled, and shook, and choked his breath;

* *Sgeen*, a polguard,

Out from the neck it rent the head,
And bore it swinging, grim, and dead.

"We gave three shouts that rent the sky;
The knights above us made reply.
Good priest, though now I'm weak and frail,
I led the vanguard in the vale."

"It grieves me, Ossian, but it's true,
The days before thee now are few;
Oh! think of Him who lights the day,
Bend down, old man, repent and pray."

"Good priest! of relics blessed and rare,
With book, and psalm, and crozier fair,—
Priest, if you knew our legions brave,
You'd mourn such men should fill the grave."

"Oh! guileless gallant, worthy man,
Kneel down and pray while yet you can!
Thy warriors now are prisoners bound,
In dungeons dark beneath the ground."

"I pray to Him who formed the sky,
To look on me with mercy's eye:
I'll talk no more of Finn's bold race,—
But, Patrick, 'twas a dreadful chase!"

Suddenly a great commotion and confusion disturbed the skirts of the crowds, who with profound attention were listening to the sonorous voice of the poet. The attention of our heroine was fixed, and even fascinated, by the advance of two files of *ceatgarinn*, or kernes, —nine men forming each file, who bore tall lances on their shoulders. These spearmen were guarding a prisoner whom she perceived—her eye brilliant with amazement—moving between them with "lion gait." This prisoner she saw, with breathless and unaccountable alarm (while a strange trembling made her quiver in every nerve), was manacled with a heavy *luairac*, or iron chain. Lost in thought, he gazed upon the ground, and his long hair fell like a silken veil over his face. A ghastly human head, swinging by the hair, and dropping fresh blood as it swung, was carried in the hand of one of these spearmen, his clutch buried in its luxuriant locks. A crippled and miserable hack, or horse, brought up the rear, moving slowly under the burden of a headless human corse.

Prone on the brute's back, and jogging as he hobbled along, the two arms were dangling helplessly down the flanks of the horse, while the two legs dangled beside the shoulders.

The bridle was held by a foolish-looking "gilly," or ʒ4r,* who, gaping about him with cockle-eyes, and leading the horse along at a snail's pace, was totally unconscious that a hungry crow had meantime alighted noiselessly, with anticipation of a feast, on the lifeless body, where it was eyeing the carrion, and evidently preparing to treat itself to a gobbet.

"Hallo, sirrah!" cried a guardsman of O'Byrne's—a dismounted m4p4c4c, named ʒubʒen4c,† in a brilliant, gilded jack—his round red shield slung gallantly behind him, and his long locks streaming over his shoulders. "Thinkest thou to bring this carrion into the presence of the O'Byrne? Keep back," he added, waving his straight broadsword in that direction.

"Isn't it coming after his head he is? Isn't it?" cried the waspish gilly, raising his contentious voice to an exasperated scream. "Isn't close to your head you keep yourself—isn't it? and why, but he to do the same?"

"But as you, Sir Ludragon,‡ have no head, either on your shoulders or elsewhere," answered the guard, "you must keep back,"—a command which the gilly was reluctantly obliged to comply with.

At the word of command, "r4c4c," the bearded and bare-headed spearmen (who guarded the prisoner) stopped short, grounded their arms with a loud clangour, while their chief—"a commander of nine"—advanced through the throng into the presence of the O'Byrne, who was seated at the feet of the Queen of Poesy. Having saluted the O'Byrne, he said,—

"My chief, the prisoner who stands before you—."

"Whence has he come?"

"We found him in the house of hospitality. He is a stranger."

"What is he accused of?"

* Servant.

† ʒubʒen4c, black helmet.

‡ ʒ4r4c4c4c4c, a shambling, slovenly fellow.

"Murder, 4 641114. He entered the house of hospitality about an hour ago, where he espied two harmless men, strangers like himself, busily engaged in reckoning rings. He rushed at the reckoners, and made a clutch at their property, which, when they would ward off, he bared his blade in a moment, and with one mighty blow swept the head from the shoulders of one of them; the survivor he dashed upon the floor, tore his property from his grasp, and in spite of the 341114* of my lord hospitaller, wounded him dreadfully. I tell you what it is,—he is a most dangerous man. It took nine of the best of us to hold him in. We take him to be a lunatic, for he kissed the rings in the most frantic fashion. No man's life will be safe till his head is between his feet. When we spoke to him, he scorned us an answer, 'Bring me to your chief—I care not for my life,' was all he said."

"Of all this, what witnesses have you?"

"The hospitaller for one, who saw him sweep this head off the honest owner, that was reckoning his rings in the house of hospitality."

And so saying, the speaker held up the head of the Dollaher, whose fiendish mouth, even in death, "grinned horrible a ghastly smile." When the Betagh arrived, he presented himself before O'Byrne with his barrad or cap in his hand, and his scarf or quadrangular mantle (composed of Irish plaid of five tints) thrown gallantly over his left shoulder. When speaking, he kept his right hand in full action, while he preserved a perfect command of his mind, his words, and his manners. "A hierna," † said the hospitaller in a grave, hoarse voice, "three strange men entered my hall about an hour ago. They appeared to be travellers, yet I did not like their appearance,—they had a certain reckless, scowling, dare-devil look, which was by no means prepossessing, and were armed with good protective swords. But, as it is my duty to feed all comers and make no inquiries, I bade them a loud and cordial 141116;‡ and a table was spread for them forthwith, and crowned at once with two mantling methers of invigorating strong ale.§

* Followers, servants.

† My Lord,

‡ Welcome.

§ 141111, ale.

When the tired strangers had slaked their thirst by long draughts, which they smacked and savoured heartily—'tis an excellent brew, my lord—my busy attendants, and no hospitaller in Ireland has more active 541140, hoisted up a fat sheep, such I have always ready roasted, together with an ox and hog—'tis only my duty, my lord—for gratuitous distribution to chance-medley visitors. The executive knife of my active steward—there's not such a knife in all the world as Suil dhuv's—filled their two platters in a moment with smoking meat, succulent and rich—'twould do you good to see it. He'd cut up an ox while—."

"But to the point, sir," exclaimed O'Byrne.

"I'm coming to that, my lord. Their meal was done, the platters cleared away, and they had emptied a horn of excellent usquebaugh, when a third man entered—a stranger like themselves. Here he is." A piercing scream from the Queen of Poesy here interrupted the witness, and her extraordinary conduct attracted and disturbed the whole assembly. From a judge she became an advocate of the prisoner.

She afterwards confessed that the instant she saw the lion-gait of this captive—that stately pace—an internal inspiration filled her soul, and a voice whispered that it was O'Farrell. She was nevertheless silent—frozen, as it were into stone. For to see *him* a prisoner—(that prince in birth and in bearing)—struck her dumb. But when she discerned with an eye of horror, as he lifted his head, the traces of wasting care on his face, she uttered a cry that pierced every heart; and, raising her arms above her head, she rushed headlong from her seat, and precipitated herself into his arms, and wept upon his bosom, while her glossy tresses of silk, escaping from their confinement, floated over his shoulders.

* * * * *

CHAPTER XLVI.

" Oh! you that have the charge of love,
 Keep him with rosy fetters bound,
 As in the fields of bliss above
 He sits with flowerets fettered round.
 Loose not a tie that round him clings,
 Nor ever let him use his wings;
 For even an hour—a minute's flight,
 Will rob the plumes of half their light;
 Like that celestial bird, whose nest
 Is found beneath far Eastern skies,
 Whose wings, though radiant when at rest,
 Lose all their glory when he flies."—MOORE.

THE beautiful valley of Glenmalure, in which O'Byrne's castle stood, was often traversed by O'Farrell and his mistress,—that valley which bards have celebrated in English and Irish poetry, and history has associated with the exploits of Feagh Mac Hugh. [And though the English poetry of that day was too wild and rugged to live, the contemporary productions of Irish muse, more polished and musical, are remembered at the present hour. The winding paths the lovers trod, the lonely grottos they retired to, were long pointed out by tradition,—which, we must admit, had little to support it, save that secret harmony which loves to mingle the warm emotions of the heart with the majestic and beautiful in nature. In traversing these charming scenes, O'Farrell often remarked that his lovely companion would begin a sentence and then hesitate—break off in the middle, and fail to conclude it. And though from her beautiful eyes and cheeks inexpressible happiness seemed to radiate in looks which gave exquisite loveliness to her features, tinging them with celestial grace and finish, yet at times she seemed restless and uneasy. And though he had often told her the adventures that befell him since he saw her, she would request him to tell her those adventures again,—how he had encountered the robbers in the forest,—how he had arrested the pretended pilgrim in the act of assailing Lord Howth,—how he had discovered in the mud the footprints of the horse

which bore her,—how he had traced him to M'Comas's camp,—how, after leaving that camp, he met a schoolboy who said he had seen a beautiful lady flying in the direction of O'Byrne's country,—how he had entered a house of hospitality, and discovered the Dollaher and his associates sharing her jewels between them. All this he went over ninety-nine times; but she would never tire of hearing it, and she hung upon his lips while he recited it the hundredth time, as if he had never told it before. O'Farrell returned her love with all the ardour of a lofty, genial, and heroic spirit. “A mesure que l'on a plus d'esprit,” says Pascal, “les passions sont plus grandes; parce que les passions n'étant que des sentiments et des pensées qui appartiennent purement à l'esprit, quoiqu'elles soient occasionnées par le corps, il est visible qu'elles ne sont plus que l'esprit même et qu'ainsi elles remplissent toute sa capacité. Je ne parle pas que des passions de feu. . . . La netteté d'esprit cause aussi la netteté de la passion; c'est pourquoi un esprit grand et net aime avec ardeur et il voit distinctement ce qu'il aime.” O'Farrell was endowed with two gifts which are eminently calculated to win and secure the affections of a susceptible heart,—he could recite with grace and dignity, and sing his native melodies with feeling and sweetness. His foster-father, who was master of these two gifts—a poet of the highest, or seventh grade—had imparted them to his beloved *Dalta** with diligence and sedulity. One day, when walking side by side in this magnificent vale of Glenmalure, the lovers were attracted by a robin which, perched conspicuously on a hazel twig, thrilled its thick-warbled notes with unusual earnestness and power.

“I wonder what that bird can be singing about?” said Maude, with a smile.

“My love!” said O'Farrell, “he is telling us, as plainly as he can speak,—

‘I am a robin,—a little ranger,—
I wander deftly from tree to tree;
I am no stranger to cold and danger,
Yet am I happy—for I am free,

* *Dalta*, a ward.

- ' Though very tiny, I feel the pleasure
Which music breathes from her syren shell ;
Though small my mansion, within its measure
There's room, believe me, for love to dwell.
- ' When blossoms tremble, when flowers are dying,
At the hoarse voice of old winter strong,
I still experience, when woods are sighing,
The priceless pleasures of love and song ;
- ' I would not change them for royal treasures,
For jewelled beakers of golden wine ;
These little pinions procure me pleasures,—
The woods, the sunshine, the heavens are mine.' ”

CHAPTER XLVII.

“ Long, long ago, beyond the misty space
Of twice a thousand years,
In Erin old there lived a mighty race,
Taller than Roman spears !
Great were their acts, their passions, and their sports,
With clay and stone
They piled on strath and shore those mystic forts
Not yet undone.
Of these was Fin, the father of the bard,
Whose ancient song
Over the clamour of all time is heard,
Sweet-voiced and strong.”

THAT was a terrible day in Dublin, when the terrible voice of the O'Farrells—having lost their chief, and suspecting that the *Du'galls* had murdered him—resounded through its suburbs. Their swords were out ; they were determined to find him. The broad brogue of these furious Gaels, their clamour, and the clash of their arms, are said to have appalled ten thousand men—vassals of the Barons of the Pales. A thousand or twelve hundred in number, the clan of O'Farrell, sword in hand, bade defiance to ten thousand, and threatened—in addition—to plunder the city, if their chief were not forthcoming.

Flying from its tall flag-staff, the great blazon of Farrell—a hound *passant*—ruffling and undulating in the breeze, was borne before the *Tanist* by the hereditary standard-bearer—an uarul, stalwart, brawny, and tall, with a fierce

countenance, rug head, and long beard. Behind it came the clansmen themselves,—men “sudden and quick in quarrel,” arranged under their respective *mayte*, in military order of the most perfect kind. Over their brawny shoulders undulated their waving tresses, whose golden curls constituted the pride of those fierce *cuimrda*—the *zlybe*, or clubs of hair which they were accustomed to wash with a mixture of water, ashes, and tallow (*i. e.*, soap), until it became as strong as that of horses. They are said to have been surprised on one occasion by the English of the Pale, where, scattered along a valley, some bathed their bodies in a river, while others coloured their locks until they shone like gold. Their rule of government, which was at once aristocratic and free, did not quench the fiery pride of those bearded clansmen. The smug, well-shaved citizens, in doublets and hose, with caps resembling that of the knave of clubs in a pack of cards, might be compared to domestic fowl; the native majesty of man had oozed out of those weavers and joiners, while the fierce clansmen of Annaley presented the eye of an eagle and the pace of a lion. At home, their bold hearts passionately throbbing for glorious achievements—full of practical romance—preferred the wooden cabin to the stony stronghold—“bones to stones,” because their bulwark was their broadsword, and valour their surest fortress. But under their modest roofs, strains of exquisite music, impassioned melodies, were warbled, memorizing the great and heroic Celts of old. The O’Farrells, as they marched through the suburbs, perfectly realized the observation of Spenser.⁷ “I have heard some great warriors say,” observes the prejudiced Spenser, “that in all the services which they have seen abroad, they never saw a more comely man than the Irishman.”

The authorities of the city found it impossible to persuade their appalled mercenaries, or train-bands, to disarm, or even to face these furious clansmen. The authorities knew not what to do,—their alarm, their conflicting opinions, their discussions, and their distress, cannot here be described. Unable to cow their fierce courage by force, they determined to deceive their warlike simplicity by stratagem. The O’Farrells were informed by the marshal

of the city that the succeeding day the Earl of Kildare himself should explain the disappearance of their chief, and give them, in addition, valuable gifts. At the dawn of the succeeding day, the plaided clan defiled from the gates of the silent city and drew up in what is now called Rathmines, in the presence of the Earl. "Were Donald O'Farrell his only foster-brother, he could not be dearer to the heart of Kildare. He loved every member of their great and free-born tribe. Their irrealisable valour was long known to him. Relying on that matchless valour and devotedness, and desirous of making them rich, he had chosen them to surprise an opulent clan—wealthy in gold and beeves—of which they should appropriate the plunder. Meantime heralds should make cry in every quarter, that whosoever brought him tidings of the absent prince, should be enriched with a hundred oxen."

The gratifying expectation of finding their chief, and enriching themselves at a blow, delighted many of the shouting Gaels, and rendered them willing dupes of the fraud of the perfidious Palesman. This error was not shared by their *Thane*,* or second in command, named Roderic of the gapped spear. Standing aloft on the firm shields of nine of his clansmen, who, locking their arms round one anothers' waists, and holding their shields over their heads, formed a steady platform, on which the long-haired warrior, Roderic of the gapped spear, rose as on a stage—"Oasuls of Ulad!" exclaimed the fire-eyed youth, "the principal stratagem of the English has consisted in all ages of honied words, concealing deception and treachery. The province of the spear and that of Conroy Mac Darius have been abstracted from the Gaels by falsehood and deception. Must the Gaels be their dupes for ever? When we are weak, they plunder us by arms; when we are strong, they rob us by perfidy. Now, as before, your manly simplicity will be deceived by their satanic malice, if you sheath your swords without receiving hostages. *We* fight for truth; they do battle for falsehood. Remember what the poet Moran, son of Maoin, said,—'Truth is the best auxiliary in battle.' Your chief

* *Tanajire*.

have they buried in a loathsome dungeon, that you may be plundered of your lands."

To return. Passionately fond of eloquence as they were, the armed O'Farrells listened in religious silence to the speaker. One—and one alone—interrupted the Thane. He was admonished by an oasul with a drawn sword, appointed to preserve silence, who, finding him incorrigible, cut off a large segment of his mantle. When the Thane had done, they dashed their javelins with all their might on their ringing bucklers, to express their approbation of his sentiments.

Mithred "the scarred," a warrior from the *callows* of Annaley, was the next to speak. He said,—

"The *cunurá** of Annaley had ever great respect for the *muiriu*† of Fingal. We confided in their honour, as we believed them to be sincere. We peaceably entered the lands of the Pale at the invitation of your Lordship. But in these lands, which we entered as friends, we have received the ill-treatment of enemies. Our chieftain is gone. To lose our head is to lose our lives. If ye have imprisoned him, ye shall likewise imprison us. If ye have slain him, ye shall likewise slay his people. Be his fate what it may, his clansmen shall share his destiny. He has disappeared in the country of the Palesmen, and the people of the Pale must find him. We assert that you have destroyed him. You declare that you are not guilty. God is the best judge. No human testimony can satisfy the O'Farrells. God alone can convince us. To God we shall appeal. As we are soldiers, and not Brehons, this is my proposal. Blade to blade and breast to breast, the O'Farrells will meet an equal number of the *Duals*, unless our prince return before this day week. If the Palesmen be in the right, the Lord of Hosts will give them victory—if not, may He crush them with disaster. As a pledge of this engagement here, my lord, here is my helmet—a gage befitting a warrior." The speaker took off his helmet, his silken locks curling gracefully round his open and ample brow. The Earl of Kildare immediately took off his helmet likewise, and a similar exchange was forthwith made between all the

* Heroes.

† Knights.

Knights of the Pale and the *cupurda* of Annaley. Before the earl had time to reply—he had barely donned O'Farrell's basnet—an event occurred which silenced the conference, and filled all the country with commotion. A light was seen burning like a silver star on the summit of a distant watch-tower, and gradually, one by one, all the castles of the Pale, near Wicklow, became crowned with columns of flame. At this calm but terrible signal, spreading farther and farther, it was evident to the alarmed Palesmen that the mountaineers were in movement.*

At this moment a band of horsemen was seen crossing the rich plain that spreads its undulating verdure between the city and the Dodder. The band consisted of twenty men, with a *ceatach*, the ensign or banner, emblazoned with the mermaid of the O'Byrnes, fluttering above them. As they advanced, the waving tassels of the cup-shaped basnets or helmets that capped these fierce and bearded mountaineers—*catbairn n-donn*—vacillated in the breeze gallantly behind them. Every one of the fire-eyed fellows grasped an upright spear or *arcar*, the butt of whose ashen shaft was pressed against the shoulder of his horse. The swords, which hung at their sides, broad, heavy, and short, resembled those which painters attribute to the ancient Romans. The armour of these mountain horsemen consisted of those gilded jacks which Spenser likens, from their brilliancy, to a player's painted coat. Their round shields, bossed and bright-faced, were slung gallantly at their backs, while the left hand of every man of them (and the left hand only) was sheathed in an iron gauntlet. At their head was a horseman like an eagle—a warrior famous among the mountaineers by the name of "Red Slave," or *golla ruadh*. He had, it was said boastingly, "a spear-thrust that would kill a bull." He was tall of stature, well-made, powerful, and active.

This "proclaimer of battle," as his countrymen called him, reining back his noble steed, an entire horse—for the O'Byrnes scorned to ride a gelding or mare—bounded from the back of his "high-maned, broad-breasted, proud, wide-leaping courser," and prepared to move on foot, with

* See battle of Magh Leana, page 146.

the bearer to an extemporaneous gibbet; but, controlling himself, he said, his face pale, and his hand trembling with the anger which he had swallowed with difficulty,—“Parchment and politeness are alike scant in the hills! Call you this a letter, my Lord of Ossory?—if it be, read us the courteous epistle;” and the earl laughed for vexation.

The Lord of Ossory took the letter and read—“The O’Byrne to Kildare. *Cur hoom mi kios no monna curhir*,—Send me my tribute, or if—” (as much as to say he would force him).

“Come,” said the earl, who, like the earlier members of his family, was rarely deficient in wit, “we shall answer this rascal-kern in his own dialect. Ho! father O’Daly, lend us thy pencraft, reverend sir.”

In a moment a brown-frocked friar—whose head, bald as that of a new-born babe, was bared by the fall of his capuche, lying in ample folds on his back and shoulders—knelt on the grass on one knee before the earl, while on his left knee he spread a blank parchment, and having an inkhorn, or *πυργειον*, secured by a stopple of wood, suspended at the belt which girdled his gown, he was, pen in hand, ready in a moment to dot down the words of the baron.

“We shall answer that snipe! Handle thy pen, good father. Write—Kildare to O’Byrne.” The busy penman immediately inscribed the words upon the parchment on his knee, in those beautiful characters used of old time in the court of Charlemagne, and thence termed the Caroline, but now Irish, characters. “*Neel reesh agut urm agus da beh*,—I owe you no tribute; and if I did—” (meaning that he would not pay it).

“Let thy master read this, sir herald; the purpose of Kildare is contained in these presents;” and so saying, he presented the letter to Red Slave, who, with a proud obeisance, slowly left his presence.

From the presence of the earl the fire-eyed *πρωταγοι* proceeded to the encampment, where the emblazoned *σενακι* of the fearless O’Farrells was waving in the wind above every lordly pavilion or humble boothie. Having got an audience of the Thauē—“Roderick of the Gapped

Spear"—he announced the safety of the chief—intelligence which was communicated at once to the clan. The shouts of the O'Farrells it is impossible to describe. When those fierce outcries of transport had abated, the *riogmhor* delivered a letter to Roderick, instructing him to form a junction with the O'Byrnes the moment that gallant clan appeared in arms in the plains of Fingall. From the encampment of the clan Farrell, the *riogmhor* repaired to his equestrian and mustachioed associates, who, on the open ground awaiting his return, were "restraining their steeds backwards, disobedient to the riders." There the *riogmhor* flung away his wand of office, and resumed his long war-spear. Then, taking forth his generous charger, he bounded on his back without the aid of stirrups, and, his tassel streaming in the wind, the fierce mountaineer galloped his powerful charger, massive and smooth, surrounded by his wild-looking comrades, back once more to the mountains of the great O'Byrnes.

Meantime the commotion of the Fingallians was terrible. There was mounting in hot haste in Dublin, and in every fortalice in the district. Bulwark and bartisan, tower and bastion, were manned, and glittering with lances in every direction in a moment.

Leaving the Knights and Barons of the Pale to make the best defence circumstances admitted of, we shall go back to the lovers, whom we left in the vales of O'Byrne.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

"Yet shun *Achilles*! enter yet the wall,
And spare thyself—thy father—spare us all;
Save thy dear life, or if a soul so brave
Neglect that thought, thy dearer glory save.
Pity, while yet I live, these silver hairs,—
While yet thy father feels the woes he bears."

POPE's *Homer*, b. xxii.

AMONG the many circumstances connected with her evasion, which Maude Barnewell related to O'Farrell, and

which almost affected him to tears, there was one which roused him to the most uncontrollable fury. 'Twas in vain that she subsequently endeavoured to appease him,—asking him was he angry with her? No, he was not; but yet, he said, his blood had turned to liquid fire. He could not be controlled. She wept, and blamed herself for having told him; but his rage only became more violent. The dalliances of love were swept away at once by the burning fury of ungovernable revenge. The Pale should be drowned in the blood of the nameless and birthless villains who crawled over it. He should have their lives. Breaking from the arms of his mistress, he rushed into the presence of his friend O'Byrne. To this prince he communicated the awful event, and O'Byrne heartily sympathized with his indignation. To these *Gaels*, or native Irish, the murder of a literary man appeared more heinous and sacrilegious than that of a priest. They might forgive the one; they had no pardon for the other. The indignant feelings of O'Farrell were sympathized in the more readily by O'Byrne, as he himself had injuries to complain of—wrongs to redress. The churls of the Pale had dared to violate his hunting grounds by shooting his deer in his own forests. He should, he said, give immediate orders to proclaim the *34,100 flus*. He should send the stake of fire through every vale; it should sparkle on every mountain-top. He would awake the hills.

Beginning in the palace, and passing from mouth to mouth, the terrible cry of the clansmen—"Shillelagh * aboo!"—was immediately ringing through the trembling groves, and rocking the hearts of the forests. It swept through the vales like the wind, and passed over the hills like a storm. At one and the same moment every field in the great country of the O'Byrnes became vocal with their terrible cry. The deer, startled from their pastures, scampered in terror to the mountain tops. The oxen bellowed and trooped together with alarm and distress. The crafty fox bounced in his den, and skulked in servile fear into deeper retirement; while the clamorous water-fowl rose garrulous from the mirror-like lakes that are zoned

in the grand old mountains of the free-born children of "Brennus the dusky."

In answer to the *3411m 11u415*, or cry of war, there was rapid arming in every house, a universal furbishing of helmets and of swords; and at the same time, pikemen and archers, axemen and slingers, with round shields on their backs, might be seen marching, in twos and in threes, with their weapons on their shoulders, converging across the country from every vale towards the *1141h* of the prince. And soon the whole of the glen, and the heights that encircled the castle, were alive and peopled with warriors; brands and bucklers were flashing in every direction; nothing could be heard round the echoing castle but the voice of command, and the clangour of horns. For the accommodation of his warriors, O'Byrne caused hunting booths to be erected. At once a swarm of *ce4110413e*, artizans, were arranged in two divisions,—one flocked into the forests, where they selected and cut down the smoothest poles and wattles, while the other swarmed into the marshes, where they mowed down vast piles of rushes and flags. These were all borne to one place, and soon arose a perfect camp. This camp, which grew into existence in a day, presented at once ranges of lofty sheds, affording ample shelter to the rank and file, or *3411u41e*, and fine compact structures for the *cu111e u411u1*, with beautiful edifices for the *11411e*.* It was divided by streets and crossways, bypaths and highroads. Lofty posts stood in these streets, on which the warriors hung their bright brands and bucklers,—where shining lances were piled in long ranges,—coats of polished mail suspended on long racks. The camp was furnished with market-places, feasting-houses and cooking places, military music and places of repose.

This bivouac of the well-armed O'Byrnes, the moment the sun sank behind the western mountains, became alive with festivity, and resonant all over with the shrill music of the pipe. It presented a great and amazing scene. O'Farrell and his mistress, locked hand in hand, gazed on it with surprise and delight. Roaring camp fires were

* *Battle of Magh Leana*, page 76.

blazing and flickering to the winds. The trunks of pines—thousands in number—cut and kindled on the uplands, and fanned by the night winds, burned hoarsely, like vast pyres of sacrifice, and shed ruddy light on the recumbent swordsmen, who, laughing and merry, knew not what care was. Great bubbling cauldrons were suspended over these fires—cauldrons which contained, individually, two beeves and a hog; and whole oxen were slowly turning, amid great noise, roasting in solemn state for the masses of the mountain soldiery.

When the swarming swordsmen of the hills were weary of the clamorous festivity and the dances of their crowded encampment, they slunk individually into their respective booths, where, buried in repose, their brawny strength was reinvigorated for the martial toils of the coming day. The moment—says an Irish manuscript—when the star-gemmed night had passed away, and the radiant morning, glittering with gold, had burst upon the laughing world, the whole swarming *ṛluaz** were rising, and the heroic champions of the vales (the *maṛte*) bounded from their pallets, and repaired to the strong castle of their lord, to receive his commands and hear the wise words of their prince. Vigour and caution characterized their address in opening the conference.

“To us it appears that the mastery of Tara has been too long intrusted to strangers—too long has the arrangement of Erin been confided to Du’als,† and the island of Science subjected to enemies. We yearn to see Eire restored to the Gaels, and the margins of its seas in the possession of its children. Having at length a hero to lead us, we shall march to storm the city of the swords, and impose the tribute of slaves on the ‘province of the spear.’”

To this it was objected, that to make war without offering terms, was a violation of justice. The speaker proposed that a *ṛoṣṣmaon* (“a proclaimer of battle”) be sent to the Du’als, offering them war or submission.

To which it was answered, that as the Du’als had lately murdered a literary man, and burned a poet alive, they had

placed themselves outside the pale of humanity, and should be treated like savage animals. Their treachery was well known. Sometimes they invited to their tables the first men of the Gaels, and killed them in the midst of their banquet, or stole on them and knifed them during sleep. Thus Thomas de Clare, having allured to his house Brian the Red of Thomond, his brother-in-law, put him to death by surprise, after partaking with him of the holy communion. "The English maintain that it is allowable to take from us whatsoever they can of our lands and goods; nor are their consciences at all burdened in consequence—not even at the hour of death. All these grievances, added to the difference of language and manners, preclude all hope of our ever preserving a peace or truce with them in this life. So great is in them the desire of dominion—so eager in us is the natural desire of recovering the inheritance of our fathers. We cherish an inveterate hatred, produced by lengthened injustice—by the murder of our ancestors, brothers, and clansmen—a feeling which will not be extinguished in our time nor in that of our sons, so that as long as we have life we will fight against them without regret or remorse, in defence of our lives."

This speech was received with acclamations. When the applauses had died away, an *uirtu* arose, who dwelt upon the difficulty of fighting the Du'als. Where the land was level, he said, the battle was unequal. The Du'als marched to war a glittering mass of bright iron armour. We, on the contrary, rush to battle in linen tunics. Against that rampart of iron—that forest of lances—valour and the javelin were of little avail. The Du'als, in addition, were furnished with firearms. They carried an artillery of fire to the field. Thus clothed in iron, and wielding thunder, the Saxons were irresistible. "I myself have had, as you all know, two comely sons," continued the *uirtu*, "giants in stature and champions in courage. Where are they now? Destroyed by the fiery breath of that sulphurous artillery. Remain within your valleys, fellow-clansmen, or, like me, you will vainly deplore, when it is too late, the valour which hurries the unthinking into war."

O'Farrell rose, and in reply to this bereaved father, observed, "Iron conquers the world. The barons of the

Du'als, and the men-at-arms who wear their badges, have attained a terrible dexterity in the use of iron; but the bóṛac* of the farm is equally dexterous in the employment of certain humble instruments, such as spades and carts. He is as much a master of these as the man-at-arms is of lances or swords. This is admitted upon all hands. Could the tools of the bóṛac be rendered as destructive as the weapons of the knight, the peasant, individually, would be equal—collectively, superior—to the man-at-arms. At least, to make the bóṛac equivalent to the warrior, all that is necessary is to render his weapons as destructive. This is easily done.

"The caured of every bṛužarō contains a wheeled vehicle, a cart, car, or dray. The formidable chariot of Queen Maev, described in the *Tain bo Cuailgne*, was only a cart like this. Every bṛužarō possesses a ladder; a rope in addition to these two articles can be easily procured. To destroy knights, archers, and men-at-arms, nothing is necessary save these three things: Lash the ladder to the dray with the force of twenty men. Let these two things be well fastened together. When this is done, let each man grip a rung—ten men at each side of the ladder, or twenty men, as the case may be. When each grips a rung, let them stoop their heads and drive it with united force against the knights or matchlockmen. They should make it fly, that is, drive along the earth, as rapidly as a man can run. It might be laden with some soft substance to shield the men behind it, who drive it—hay, or straw, or feather beds. An archer on the summit of the hay should take aim and shoot at the enemy's faces as the dray advances. On ordinary roads, or in the streets of a captured town, no infantry, no cavalry could for a moment resist a couple of drays driven forward abreast by the united strength of forty fast-footed men, especially if the drays were grinning and garnished with trenchant scythes and pitchforks. I can imagine a body of knights sweeping down, sword in hand, against it, like a whirlwind; but I can also imagine their horses' legs cut off by scythes, and the riders tumbled in the dust. These two bodies, the

* Peasant.

cavalry and the scythed cart, would come together with an impetus which must prove ruinous to the knights. The resistance of the infantry would be less formidable. A few carts abreast could be driven through their lines—driven on top of them. But of course we may have twelve carts, or as many as we choose.”

O’Byrne and his *mayte* went forth into the presence of his whole army where that chieftain addressed his men.

“The O’Byrnes,” he said, “were warriors from the cradle,—perfected in each manly exercise,—taught to stem the foaming torrents,—to cast the ‘yellow-knotted spear-shaft,’—to wield the *tuatha catha*, or battle-hatchet,—to draw the tough yew bow,—to beard the wolf in his lair, and transfix the deer upon the hill.

“If your intrepidity in war, and your devotedness to your prince, were not known to me of old,—children of Cahir Mor,—I should have slight hopes of succeeding in the present enterprise. I rely on your swords; I confide in your daring; it is these which sweep doubt from my mind, and render me certain of success. Having repeatedly tested your courage in the pass of peril,* and found you faithful to the death, I have undertaken, without apprehension, the noblest enterprise in the world. We are the children of Cahir Mor. We love these glorious hills, and we hate the perfidious enemy. This unanimity of mind is the pledge of victory in arms. Already my design is known to you all, and I cannot but tell you that my spirit is quickened to it hourly more and more, upon thinking what degradation the O’Byrnes shall be reduced to should the Du’als spread their power over these hills, as they have already mastered our lowlands. Need I tell you that birthless and nameless villains,—the upstart nobles of the *Galls*,†—have usurped the inheritance of Bran Dhu,—taken possession of our cities,—they would not let us wash our hands in our own seas, if they could help it. As for the *Gael*,—Milesians, or Firbolgs, or whoever we be,—they consider us as *moze*, a mob. We are under the authority of those to whom—if the country were on a right footing—we should rather be a terror. But how long will you—

* *Beanna báozal*, a gap of danger. † Foreigners.

the bravest of men—suffer their intolerable insolence?" Cries of—"Not a moment!" "Not a moment!" "We have arms, we have valour, we have right on our side. We have nothing to do but sally into their fields. Who, that has any soul in him, can endure that these base churls should possess the rich pastures of *Bran Dhu*,—should hold the broad lands of fertile *u Faelam*,—the pleasant levels which we once possessed,—and pay no tribute for such territories to us, their lords. It is slavery to be cooped up in these mountains, when we should spread our cottages over the wide plains of Lagenia. Arise, then, brother clansmen, and lash up your resentment! View the liberty which you have so often sighed for; view the riches and honours that are before you: they will become soon the rewards of your success."

This speech of O'Byrne, which was made in the presence of the whole army, called forth the loudest acclamations. By the way, the war-cries of the Irish seem to have made a profound impression on Spenser. As the closing clans marched to battle, it must have been terrible—judging from his description—to hear those awful war-shouts, ascending as if to rend the very sky. In this war, as, nine by nine, they defiled into the plains; and higher and higher rose the vast out roar of "*rjol Oljol abu*," the mail-clad chivalry of the Pale might be seen shrinking uneasily, while the trees re-echoed and trembled, as tall kerns, and massive gallowglasses, armed with shining battle-axes, and raising shout upon shout, unfurled the blazing standard of their tribe—the mermaid. We shall not, however, intrude into the province of history by describing how the crested chiefs, and their warrior people, descended into the plain,—how they swept the low country, converting it into "one broad, dark, fiery, immensely-smoking forest." We may mention, however, that the Knights of the Pale met the brawny clansmen of the hills in the plain of Rathmines. Mounted on barbed steeds, and clad *cap-à-pis* in suits of plate and mail, the only aperture in which was that which admitted light through the *avantaille*, they—knights riding to battle—considered themselves invincible. The deadly shafts of their cross-bow men would have soon thinned the troops

of the impetuous natives, were it not for O'Farrell, who caused them to cover their whole front with a running battery of loaded carts, under the cover of which they came near the enemy. When their headlong valour would not suffer them to remain concealed, then, instead of casting their javelins in the usual way, the O'Byrnes, wrapping their mantles round their left arms, and wielding their keen white-handled axes,—along the shaft of which the thumb was always extended to guide the blow,—they swept down upon the mail-clad knights, and uttering their usual war-shout of "Shillelagh aboo!" and "Feargal aboo!" they clove through the foreign shields, hauberks, gambesons, and plastrons. Such was the fierce force with which the O'Byrnes and O'Farrells plied their terrible axes, that in several instances the whole thigh of a man-at-arms, though cased in well-tempered armour, was lopped off by a single blow of the axe, the whole limb falling on one side of the horse, and the pale and expiring body on the other. The O'Byrnes and O'Farrells—the united clansmen—followed the knights fast in their retreat into Dublin. But we shall not describe the victory, nor shall we pause to describe, when the victory was won, the roaring of the captives, blended with the lowing of the herds of oxen, the shrieks of the maidens, the uproar of the champions and warriors, which paralyzed the pale citizens skulking in their lanes. Suffice it to say, that the O'Byrnes, after a time, succeeded not only in entering the walls of the city, whose gates they drove in before them by means of cars propelled with irresistible force by the united strength of a number of men, but surprised and captured the castle, and liberated all the shouting Gaels confined in that strong fortress. To gratify Maude Barnewell, at her entreaty, they subsequently pardoned the *Galls* of Dublin, restored them their castle and town, and marched back to their homes in the hills, laden with booty.

A contemporary has given us a summary of these events in the following words. "Edmund Oge O'Byrne hath kept war to the Englishrye nighe thys yere, comytinge infynyte burnyings, prays, spoyles, and manslaughter, and within these five weeks entred with force in the king's castel of Dublin, which is the strongest hold in Irelande, and led

with him prisoners at his pleasure and cattaille, which enterprise hath more discouraged the king's subjects there than the losses of £2,000, insomuche as nightly sithence greate watche is in the city of Dublin, fearing that the same should be pylfered, prostrate, and destroyed, whereof they never dreaded so much." *

Our heroine, during the war, obtained the praise alike of *Galls* and *Gaels*, as "checking plunder, and hating injustice," while "her tranquil mind, and serene countenance," it was said, "caused the apple trees to bend with rosy fruit." She caused the Galls † to submit to the following tribute, which they undertook to pay annually to the O'Byrnes, giving hostages and castles as pledges of the payment:—

I.

"Seven hundred *tinnes*, ‡ seven hundred hogs,
Seven hundred oxen, seven hundred good wethers,
Seven hundred cloaks, and seven hundred cows,
From the territories of the Galls in one day.

II.

"Two hundred cloaks—no falsehood,
A hundred hogs—heavy the herd,
And two hundred lively milch cows
From the lands of the tribes of Forthuatha."

Lest it should be buzzed about at any time in future, as once in the past it was whispered by scandal, and blazed abroad by malevolent rhymers and satirists, that the heroine of this story—the daughter of an old and noble house—was merely the paramour, not the lawful bride, of the great captain of the O'Farrells, who, it was libellously bruited, bore her shrieking away from her clamorous kinsmen, as the fierce falcon sweeps away the dove. We beg leave to quote a short extract from a document which sets the question at rest, and which we implore our friends to peruse, as it contains the pith and moral of our tale. A patent of denization, which was long preserved among the papers of the family, grants to Donald O'Farrell, husband of Maude Barnewell,—“That he, and all the issues between them, begotten and to be begotten, be of a free state and

* Vide *Tracts Relative to Ireland*, v. 2, page 85.

† Foreigners.

‡ Salted pigs.

condition, and that they be free, and acquitted of, from all Irish servitude, and that they may use and enjoy the English laws, in the same manner as Englishmen within the said land do use and enjoy the same, and that they do answer, and be answered unto, in all courts whatsoever, and may acquire and purchase lands, enjoy the same, be promoted to ecclesiastical benefices, and enjoy the same, as Englishmen in the said land do have and enjoy them,—notwithstanding any Irish provision, or custom, or any statutes, acts, ordinances, or privileges to the contrary thereof, in former times had or used.”

This document, which, like the famous bull of Adrian IV., is not dated, we think a conclusive reply to the slanders in question.

We are informed by the famous Oliver Goldsmith, in his learned work on natural history, that labour of the mind is much more exhaustive to the bodily powers than any other species of labour. I have great reason to believe that Oliver Goldsmith is right; for the very moment I finished the last line in the last page of the last chapter of this history, I leaned back in my arm-chair and fell fast asleep. I could not be many minutes in this lethargic state, when the door swung on its hinges, and an uarúl from the plains of Ossory—a “wild Irishman,” as the Palesmen would term him—stepped into my study, and made me a low bow. I saw him, as distinctly as I now see my own hand, in his picturesque gabardine of yellow linen, his tight trews, his light “brogues,” and pointed cap—in short, the native Irish dress, against which the Parliament of the Pale vainly thundered for three hundred years. He was a fine, tall, bold-looking fellow, with a broad-sword by his side and a *sgian* on his thigh. He raised his cap or *barraid* from his head when he was in the room, and made me a second bow. “*so de mairi aca tu?*” said I.

“*so mairi; so no mairi aca tu,*” said he, “I have waited upon you,” he continued, “to know what became of young Lord Howth?”

According to the custom of dreamers, I thought this question quite natural. "Well," said I, "he married Madeleine ni Byrne."

"What?" said he, "contrary to the statute of Kilkenny? I thought the Milesian Irish never intermarried with the Palesmen."

"You are mistaken," I answered. "Eva, daughter of Diarmuid Mac Murrough, married Richard Strongbow, Hugh de Lacy married a daughter of Ruairi King of Connaught. Richard de Burgo, commonly called the great, married a daughter of Cathal 'of the red hand.' Walter de Burgo married a daughter of O'Maolbrenain. John Butler, fifth Earl of Ormond, married a daughter of Thurlough O'Brian. Edmund, eighth Earl of Ormond, married a daughter of O'Carroll. His son James married a daughter of Daniel O'Cavanagh. Mac Gillpatrick married Margaret, daughter of the first Earl of Ossory, while the sister of this lady was married to Donough More O'Brian. But it would be endless to give a detailed history of the intermarriages between the great Irish and Anglo-Irish nobles."

"What became of that man with sharkish teeth, whom you mention more than once in the course of your narrative?"

"Well, when O'Farrell killed the Dollaher, he inflicted a wound on his companion—the man you inquire for—of which he died a few weeks afterwards."

"What became of M'Comas?"

"M'Comas went over to England with the greater part of his band, and took service with the Earl of Northumberland. He was killed in a battle on the borders of Scotland by a moss-trooper, who ran him through with his lance."

"What became of Tom Neylrod, the Marshal of Dublin?"

"He was killed before the walls of the city immediately after the tournament."

"What became of Friar Salmon?"

"He died of old age in the castle of Drimhna."

"Sir, I thank you," said my visitor with a stately bow. "Sir, I thank you; and if ever you come to Ossory, inquire for Donnell Rua Mac Gillpatrick, and I'll give you the

■ heartiest welcome ever man received. Give me your hand.
■ Ireland never produced such a *pleach*. You are a true
■ *Ollamh*. You have evidently mastered the *Teinim Laegha*,
■ the *Imos Forosnadh*, and the *Dichedal do Chennaibh*. You
■ know the pedigrees of families and the etymologies of
■ names. In a word, you are the king of the Ollamhs of
■ Erin.”

■ At these words I burst into a long, loud fit of laughter,
■ which broke my illusion. I started up, wide awake, looked
■ round for my visitor in the yellow gabardine, but he was
■ gone. To my grief, I was alone.

NOTES.

"THE KNIGHTS OF THE PALE."

By this phrase I mean the race of men vulgarly termed in Ireland "Strongbonians," or followers of Strongbow, Earl of Pembroke, who entered Ireland in the reign of Henry II. Speaking of these men, William of Newbridge, an English historian, says,—*Etenim temporibus sub specie militantium Hibernia insula irrepserunt Angli*—i. e., "About the same time the English wormed themselves into Ireland in the guise of auxiliary soldiers." Of the descendants of these adventurers, O'Daly (in *The Geraldines*, page 118, a work translated by the Rev. Mr. Meehan) speaks very favourably:—"The people paid submission to them through all their holdings. They had, moreover, castles and strongholds, numerous sea-ports—lands that were charming to the eye, and rich in fruits—the mountains were theirs, together with the woods—theirs were the rocky coasts, and the sweet blue lakes, which teemed with fish. Yea, this fairest of lands did they win with the sword and govern by their laws—loved by their own, dreaded by their enemies—they were the delight of princes, the patrons of gifted youth. Oh, but they were a great and glorious race."

"THE CITY OF THE SWORDS."—(Page 1.)

Dublin is termed the City of the Swords in the *λεῖβαῖ ηα 3-εῖδαιτ*, or "Book of Rights." It is also termed the "City of the Hurdles." Swords were very possibly manufactured in Dublin as early as the time of Ptolemy the geographer, who terms Dublin, or Eblana, *Πολις ἐπισημος*.

A very interesting remark with reference to Dublin is made by a Frenchman, who accompanied Richard II. to Ireland. He says that when 30,000 men, under Richard's command, marched into Dublin, and swelled the number of consumers by that amount, the metropolitan markets were so profusely supplied with provisions from the neighbouring country, that food did not rise in price. The better to understand this, let us consider what happened during the year of Dargan's Industrial Exhibition. At one and the same moment we never had in Dublin 30,000 visitors during Dargan's Exhibition. Yet provisions did rise in Dublin during the year in question. If this be true, Dublin, it would seem, was more amply supplied in the reign of Richard II. than in the reign of Victoria I. From which the inference is inevitable, that the population was at least as numerous.

“THE PROVINCE OF THE SPEAR.”—(Page 1.)

In his *Dissertations on the History of Ireland*, the Rev. Charles O'Connor says,—“After his return from his exile in Gaul, *Ἰάβρις* (the orator) *Ἰονσρεάς* (naval) brought the *Lagean* into use—a sort of broad-edged lance, from which the provincialists of Leinster derive the name of *Laighnidh*, and their country the name of *Laighean*.” This word is pronounced *lane*. The final syllable in the word *Leinster* is an abbreviation of the Danish *stadr* or *stathr*, *a state*.

“THE REARLORN HOPE.”—(Page 2.)

In Dymmok's *Treatise of Ireland* page 32, he says,—“Before the vanguard marched the forlorn hope . . . the rest of the horse-troops fell in before the rearward, except thirty, which, at the head of the rearlorn hope, conducted by Sir Henry Danvers, made the retreat,” &c. We are indebted to the Irish Archæological Society for this explanation of “the forlorn hope;” a word, the meaning of which was misunderstood by English lexicographers. See *Tracts on Ireland*, by that Society.

The elements of the first chapter are derived from *The Book of Obits*, edited by John Henthorn Todd, D.D.; Meyrick's *Ancient Armour*; Mill's *Chivalry*; Strutt's *Works*; St. Palay; Warburton and Whitelaw's *History of Dublin*. In the last-named work it is stated that a lurking thief skulked at one time in a chest in the cathedral, until night favoured his furtive purposes, when he plundered the church, &c.

“THAT ROYAL WEAPON, THE AXE.”—(Page 5.)

Meyrick, in his famous work *On Ancient Armour*, applies the epithet “royal” to the axe. This adjective was possibly applied because the weapon could not be well converted into a missile. Cowardice loves missiles, and fights at a distance; valour fights hand to hand. The Romans were neither slingers nor archers. The Scotch Highlanders being eminently brave, made very little use of the bow. “The Irish,” says Cambrensis, “use one hand only in wielding the axe,—the thumb is fixed along the upper part of the handle, and directs the blow with such precision, that the helmet, towering over the neck, cannot protect the head, nor a coat of chain armour the rest of the body: *ab eorum securibus nullum esse securitatem*.”

"GENEROUS, NOBLE, AND VALIANT HEARTS."—(Page 14.)

The nation which has lost its liberty, like the woman who has lost her honour, is seldom mentioned except to be insulted. The Irish, having lost their national independence, are decry'd by English authors—and Lord Bacon among others—as barbarians. "That fellow has no soul: where is his shoulder-knot?" To our mind, the barbarism of the Irish very much resembles the judicial honesty of Lord Bacon. More modern authors, whose wits, as Pope has informed us, "are kept in ponderous vases," have echoed "the basest, meanest, wisest of mankind," with noisy unanimity. Their darling accusation is a hearsay tale about a Bohemian baron which they find in *Fynnes Moryson*. While they repeat this hearsay tale, it is not a little amusing to find them altogether forgetful of the description of Queen Elizabeth's maids of honour in the *Nugæ Antiquæ*, who, says that author, were accustomed to squat, mother naked, before the fire the whole day long. Elizabeth did not interdict this shameful practice. She confined her authority to a prohibition of female nudity in her palace after noontide. Now, if an Irish chief sat naked at his fireside, in the reign of Elizabeth, as Moryson asserts, he was imitating the court ladies and London fashions of that day. We fancied ourselves reading of Queen Pomare, and the squaws of Otaheite, when reading in the *Nugæ Antiquæ* the above account of the court of the virgin queen. Let us observe, however, that one or two barbarous customs are by no means proofs of universal barbarism. A refined civilization may flourish alongside of a certain degree of barbarism. The amiable Montezuma, according to Herrera, "ate very fastidiously of human flesh, and only when it was scrupulously cooked and nicely prepared." Mexican civilization was like that of Pagan Rome,—at once brilliant and ferocious. In Mexico we find the arts flourishing, and the intellect highly enlightened, amongst cannibals. The Romans, who melted into tears over the well-sung woes of Dido, exulted and shouted at the bloody horrors of the circus. We are reminded of the savages of Canada, when reading in *Brantome* of the cremation of the assassin of the Prince of Orange, &c. We must admit that enormities of this kind are not charged upon the Irish. The Irish, indeed, are charged with barbarism, because, as is alleged, they tied the tails of their horses to their ploughs. But we silence our detractors, by pointing to the fine *basso relievo* on the cross of Kells, which was exhibited in Dargan's great Exhibition, representing spirited coursers harnessed to a native chariot, going spankingly along with bearded and long-haired warriors,—

"Their beard a foot before them, and their hair a yard behind."

On this subject, as on many others, the very best sentence ever written by an *English* author is that of Gibbon:—"The use of letters is the principal circumstance which distinguishes a civilised people from a herd of savages." This does not refer to science,

"Un peuple qui ne serait que savant," says Fontaines, "pourrait devenir barbare; un peuple de lettres est de sa nature and necessairement poli et sociable." Now, the Irish were a literary people, at least as much so as the Icelanders.

"SHARWAN LOCLANNACH."—(Page 17.)

This *Sigh* or geni is described in one of the excellent books published for the Ossianic Society by John O'Daly. Perhaps no man now alive has rendered more important services to Irish literature, or is more worthy of the gratitude of Irish-scholars, than the publisher in question.

"HE WAS BORN UNDER AN EVIL ASPECT."—(Page 22.)

Judicial astrology appears to have originated in deep and prolonged considerations on the origin of time. It is admitted on all hands that the influence of time is irresistible. Winter is not more destructive to the tender leaves of the forest than years to the successive generations of the human race. In its merciless action, time is perpetually sweeping hundreds of millions from the face of the earth, and replacing them by new-born hundreds of millions. Time makes and unmakes monarchies, republics, aristocracies, and empires. It pulverizes mountains into dust, and strews the bed of the ocean with stratified rock ground down to rubbish. The animal world, the human race, and the earth on which we exist, are toys and slaves of the tyrant time. Now, if we ask what is time, we are told that time is merely the measurement of the motions of the heavenly bodies. For instance, the real or apparent motion of the sun round the earth produces a day; the real or apparent motion of the moon produces a month, and twelve of these lunar revolutions is a year. Time consists of years, months, and days; that is to say, it is produced by motions of the heavenly bodies. Now, if time be omnipotent, must not the parents of time—the heavenly bodies—be irresistible, and subvert thrones, and sweep away empires? Must not the parents of time be the true rulers of the universe? Years whiten the head, bow the frame, and destroy human life. Now, years are produced by the motion of the sun through the signs of the zodiac. In short, time and the heavenly bodies are identical. The latter give birth to all that takes place in time. The books of Isaiah and Jeremiah, as well as that of Daniel, allude in several places to astrology. In Christian times, astrology, which originated in Pagan ages, assumed a form consistent with the doctrine of the Church on the subject of predestination. The stars did not compel, but merely indicated

coming events—a position which left the will free. Hence churchmen, like Cardinal D'Ailly (who died in 1425), were believers and adepts in judicial astrology.

“THAT YOUR LORDSHIP LATELY MARCHED TO A GREAT TOWN,” &c.—(Page 90.)

Though the right of private war, as exercised by O'Farrell in Annaley, was denounced by the Earl of Kildare, he did not fail to exercise that right himself in prosecuting his quarrel with the Earl of Ormond. The *Book of Howth*, in a paragraph which has never been printed, says,—“Upon a time, Lord Gerot (Earl of Kildare) came to Dublin, and by craft and policy called the citizens out upon Oxmantown ground, and unawares set upon them and slew many of them; and one, Talbot of Belgard. . . . was inforced with his horse to leap a wall, and by estimation it was judged about twenty-five feet over, and was in great danger to be slain or taken before he came into the city. In the meantime, the Earl Gerot sent part of his horsemen over the river, against St. James's Gate, to enter into the city. But, as God would, some of the city being upon the walls, did see the horsemen coming, and had the gates shut, so they were disappointed of their enterprise. This was because Lord Gerot thought the citizens took part with the Butlers more than they did with him. He afterwards went through the English Pale, and whoso any of the Earl of Ormond's kin and friends were, he robbed, spoiled, burned, and killed them. In like manner, the Earl of Ormond, another time, with the O'Briens and others, his friends in the south, came towards Dublin, and camped awhile at the wood of St. Thomas's Court, and so came to Dublin to see his friends, who told him of the doings of the Earl of Kildare; after which, so many as he did understand to be toward the Earl of Kildare, he destroyed to the utmost of his power, and said openly he wished to God he had been by when the Earl of Kildare played those pranks! This was said at Killester, by Dublin. . . . And he said further, if any one in the English Pale would stand in defence of the Earl of Kildare, he would even now fight with him. ‘Well,’ said Sir Nicholas (Lord of Howth) ‘there are 500 in the English Pale would stand in that quarrel against your Lordship.’ . . . ‘Well,’ said the Earl, ‘durst you hazard the battle between you and me to try that cause? By God's blood! if you durst, I would find in my heart to thrust this knife through you!’” &c.—King's *Collectanea de Rebus Hibernicus*.

“ERIC.”—(Page 91.)

In Bishop King's *Collectanea*—a manuscript preserved in the

Royal Dublin Society's Library—the *eric* is defined as a mulct, viz. :—

Eric vel mulcta <i>Latine</i> . Pretium arpi aut ducis occisi 15,000 drachmæ, tertia parte solida.	
Episcopi aut comitis,	8,000
Vice comitis,	7,000
Presbiteri aut Baronis,	2,000
Hominis plebei habentis terram per servitium militarium ad 120 jugera aut "ploughlands,"	2,000

"A SHERIFF."—(Page 92.)

That O'Farrell was not very willing to receive a sheriff into his dukedom, is not to be wondered at, if we consider the duties of a sheriff, as described by Blackstone, book i., c. 9. "As the keeper of the king's peace, both by common law and special commission, he is the first man in the county, and superior in rank to any nobleman therein during his office. He may apprehend and commit to prison all persons who break the peace, or attempt to break it; and may bind any one in a recognizance to keep the king's peace. He may and is bound, *ex officio*, to pursue and take all traitors and murderers, felons and other misdoers, and commit them to jail for safe custody. He is also to defend his county against any of the king's enemies, when they come into the land; and for this purpose, as well as for keeping the peace and pursuing felons, he may command all the people of his county to attend him; which is called the *posse comitatus*, or power of the county, which summons every person, above fifteen years old and under the degree of a peer, is bound to attend." The presence of such a functionary must reduce the chief to a cypher, and the *Brehon*, if possible, to something less.

THE COVER.

THE reader's attention is respectfully directed to the design or engraving on the cover of this book. At the top, he will see a comely face,* with plaited beard and regular features. This face is copied from the interior (near the top) of the round tower of Devenish Island, where four faces still solemnly look out in *basso relievo* from a circular plinth or belt of stone which goes round the tower.

Centuries have passed away, Ireland has been torn by invasion, society subverted by revolution, the loud hurricane of war swept over the island a hundred times, while these heads remained calm and unmoved, to show the mild physiognomy of the men who founded the round towers. And assuredly they were fine men—not savages. The beard, plaited in so complex a manner, reminds us of the elaborate beard of eastern royalty in *Laysard's Travels*. The imperial people, whose toilet was so carefully attended to, must have kept slaves. Indeed, we know they did. Nor is this all. Nations, like families, have a type of face—household features—visages of their own. The hooked nose and goggle eyes of the young Jew look out from the old frescoes of Egyptian tombs. The glassy waters of the Ganges mirror the same features which are seen in their rocky sculptures two thousand years old. Hostile conquerors may seek to crush national feeling out of oppressed hearts, but facial nationality defies tyranny, and pervades successive generations. So it was with the Irish. We were a comely people when the round towers were built. And ages afterwards, when Strongbow invaded Ireland, we were still comely. Cambrensis speaks emphatically of our rosy complexions and symmetrical persons. *Corporibus congruis et coloratissimis vultibus*. This favourable testimony is confirmed by Froissart, Spenser, Campion, Dymock, and Moryson,—a crowd of witnesses. But this account does not agree with the notion formed by ethnologists of the Celtic face, any more than the monument in Devenish Island. But *this* is the Celtic face of history, as written by Polybius—not of modern ethnology, as written by Pritchard. For instance, the Celts of history were gigantic in stature. *Omnia nota sunt*, says Pausanias, *de ingenti statura Celtarum*. "Everything relative to the enormous stature of the Celts is well known; for which reason," he goes on

* See Barrow's *Travels in Ireland*.

to say, "the Romans purchased Celts for litter bearers, in order that their matrons might be carried by the strange tallness of these people above the heads of the populace." Adam Smith makes a similar remark as to the Celts of his day. "The London chairmen," says Smith, "are nearly all Irish." The modern English and ancient Romans selected the same people for like purposes, because those people were powerful, comely, and tall.*

When that notorious libeller of Ireland, *Cambrensis*, tells us that the Irish were "truly barbarous, not only in the fashion of their dress, but in that long and luxuriant hair and beard, all savagely at variance with modern custom—most barbarous they are in all their habits"—may not our antiquarians ask, "Is this monumental face the physiognomy of a barbarian?" Does not the sculptor refute the libeller?"

Leland informs us, in his *History of Ireland*, that Shane O'Neill, in 1562, "resolved to attend the Queen (Elizabeth)—but to attend her in a manner suited to his princely dignity—and for this purpose hastened his departure with a magnificent train of Irish followers. He appeared in London attended by a guard of *kernes*, arrayed in the richest habiliments of their country,—armed with the battle-axe, their heads bare, their hair flowing on their shoulders, their linen vests dyed with saffron, with long and open sleeves, . . . a spectacle astonishing to the people (of London), who imagined that they beheld the inhabitants of some distant quarter of the globe."

The figure to the right represents one of these kernes; for though Leland, in common with Camden, terms them gallow-glasses, they were not strictly gallowglasses,—they were kernes armed with axes. This "linen vest, dyed with saffron", contained thirty-two yards of linen, of which a writer of the sixteenth century says,—

"With plaits on plaits it plaited was,
As thick as plaits could lie."

This garment was strictly forbidden by Act of Parliament. The "Statute of Kilkenny," passed in the reign of Edward III., denounces it; while another Act, passed in 1537, forbids the "using or wearing, in smocks or shirts, above seven yards of linen, to be measured according to the king's standard." The Parliament of the Pale continued thundering against this yellow surplice—this *filia more*—during three hundred years. These are the "Irish rage" which the Earl of Desmond put on when, in 1576, "he cast off the hated English apparel, and appeared at the head of his shouting and impassioned clansmen in the costume of Irish chieftains." It is alluded to in the *Thaan Bo Cuailgne* as *lene ce rpol n15 m4 ce153 f1lljuo ce ce153 op1 f1n1 zel ce153*,—"a shirt of royal linen, embroidered with gold, upon his

* "The inhabitants of Ireland," says Ussher, quoting an ancient author, "are men of tall stature and powerful frame—large as giants—very expert in the use of the bow, and the bravest soldiers in war."

white skin." It is mentioned in the *Brehon Laws*, v., ii., as the dress of foster-children, which should be washed every second day. Tytler informs us, in his *History of Scotland*, v. 2, that Shane O'Neill sent a messenger to Argyle bearing a letter written in Irish characters. "The manner and behaviour of him from whom the letter came," says Argyle, writing to London, "was not so strange as it was wonderful to see the presence of his ambassador—a man that exceedeth many in stature. He walked on foot out of Ireland hither alone. His diet, by reason of the length of his journey, so failed him, that he was fain to leave his saffron shirt in gage."

Under this linen surplice the Irish wore a woollen jerkin,—such as we see on the archer painted in Knockmoy Abbey. Under it, too, they wore the famous *bracca*, which has given rise to the word *breeches*. "The breeches used by the Irish," says Lynch,* "was a long integument, not cut at the knee, but combining in itself the stocking and the trousers, and drawn by one pull over the feet and thighs. It was not flowing, but tight, and revealed the shape of the limbs." From this garment, made of plaid, ancient Gaul derived the appellation of *braccata*, or *plaided* Gaul. "The more respectable classes," says Lynch, writing in the reign of Charles II., "had laid aside the *bracca*, or *brackawn*, before I was born; but neither the threats of judges nor pecuniary fines could compel the humbler orders to abandon them."

In addition to the *bracca*, the figure at the left wears a mantle. This is the *sagum* of the Latin classics,—the ꝥE4C4 of our native writers. It is the very garment which Spenser inveighs against with such amusing vehemence, as a "fit house for an outlaw, a meet bed for a rebel, and an apt cloak for a thief. First, the outlaw being, for his many crimes and villainies, banished from the towns and houses of honest men, and wandering in waste places, far from danger of law, maketh his mantle his house, and under it covereth himself from the wrath of heaven, from the offence of earth, and from the sight of men. When it raineth, it is his pent-house; when it bloweth, it is his tent; when it freezeth, it is his tabernacle. In summer, he can wear it loose; in winter, he can wrap it close; at all times he can use it—never heavy, never cumbersome. Likewise, for a rebel, it is as serviceable: for in this war which he maketh, when he still fleeth from his foe, and lurketh in thick woods, it is his bed, yea, and almost his household stuff. . . . Lastly, for a thief, it is so handsome, as it may seem it was first invented for him."

The figure at the right wears a cap. This is the famous b4ꝥꝥE4C, or national cap, which was worn by the Irish since they quitted Asia Minor. It derives its name from two Irish words, b4ꝥꝥꝥ, *the top*, and E4C4, *a garment*; though some, it is true,

* *Cambrensis Erevsus*.

would derive it from *bjot*, a spike. In all those countries where Celtic power was once paramount, some vestiges of the *barrete* may still be found. It is the origin of the Italian *Beretta*, the Spanish *Barrete*, the French *Birette*, the Portuguese *Barrete*, and ecclesiastical *Birreta*, which some authors foolishly derive from the Greek word *πυρ*, fire, with which it has no connection.

Of this cap, Harris says,—“The Irishmen wore anciently on their heads a sort of bonnet or cap, called, in Irish, *Barred*, and in German, *Bireth*. This sort of cap is described to be of the shape of a cone.”

“So partial were the Irish to this cap,” says Walker, “that they thought it would fit an angel.”

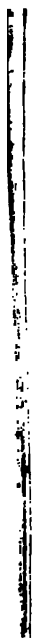
“They covered their heads with the *biorrad*,” says Lynch, “the same head-gear as that worn by the Gauls—namely, an oblong cap, terminating in a cone.”

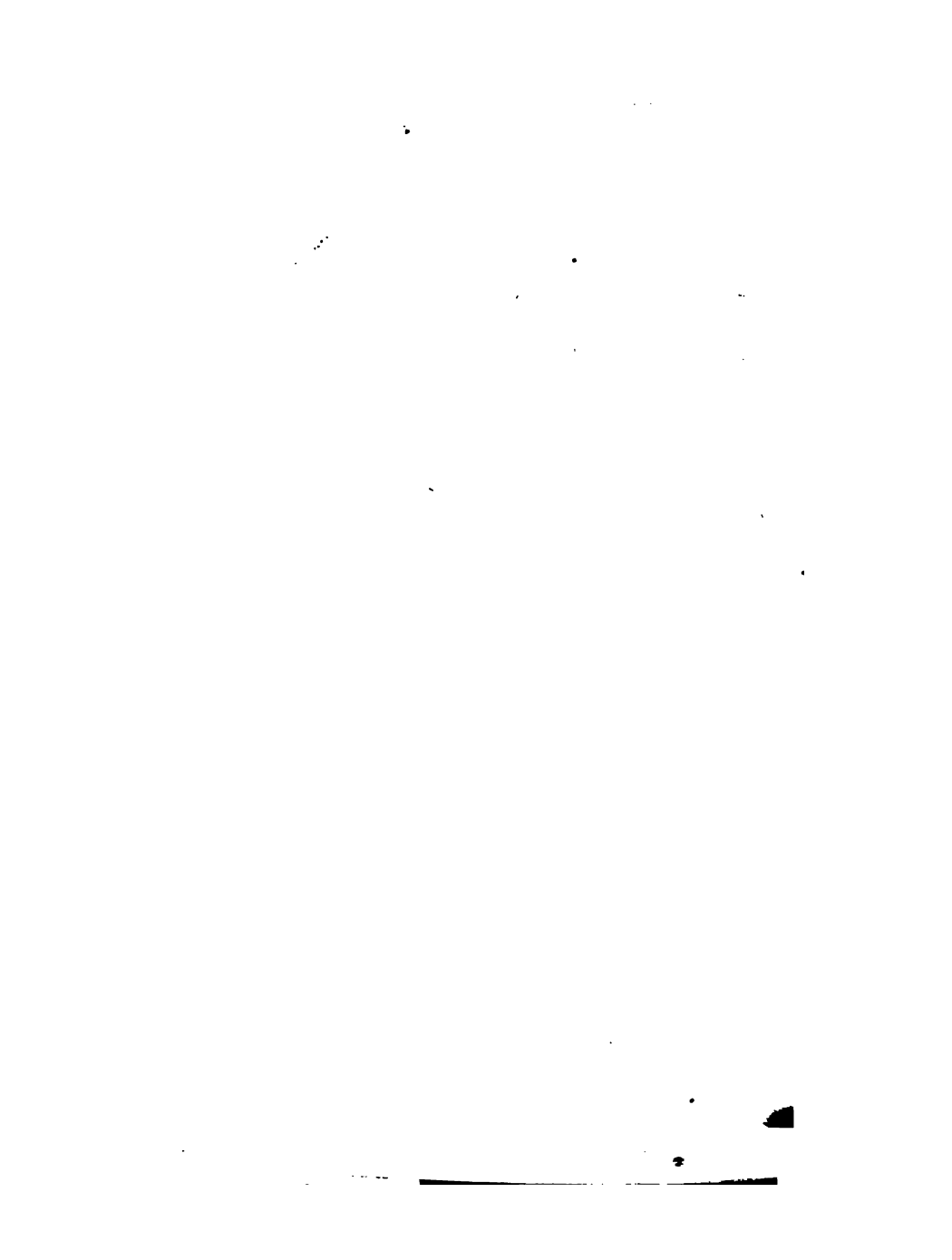
It seems evident, from a passage in Walker's work on *Irish Dress*, that the *barread* was worn so late as the last century, in remote parts of Ireland. In those times of national decay and prostration, the *barread* was found susceptible of the sordid uses, while it merited more than the eloquent eulogy bestowed by the Scottish bard on the famous bonnet of Rob Roryston,—

“This bonnet, it covered his head from the rain;
When the window was broken, it filled up a pane;
And when he got drunk, and began for to swear,
This very same bonnet was waved in the air.

“When Robin grew good, and began for to pray,
It kept, like a cushion, his knees from the clay;
’Twas a meal bag at times, and potato bag too;
He tried it with kail, but it let out the broo.

“When the besom was wanting, it swept up the byre;
When the bellows was broken, it blew up the fire;
When age stript away all its grace to adorn,
Through the holes that were in it he winnowed his corn.”





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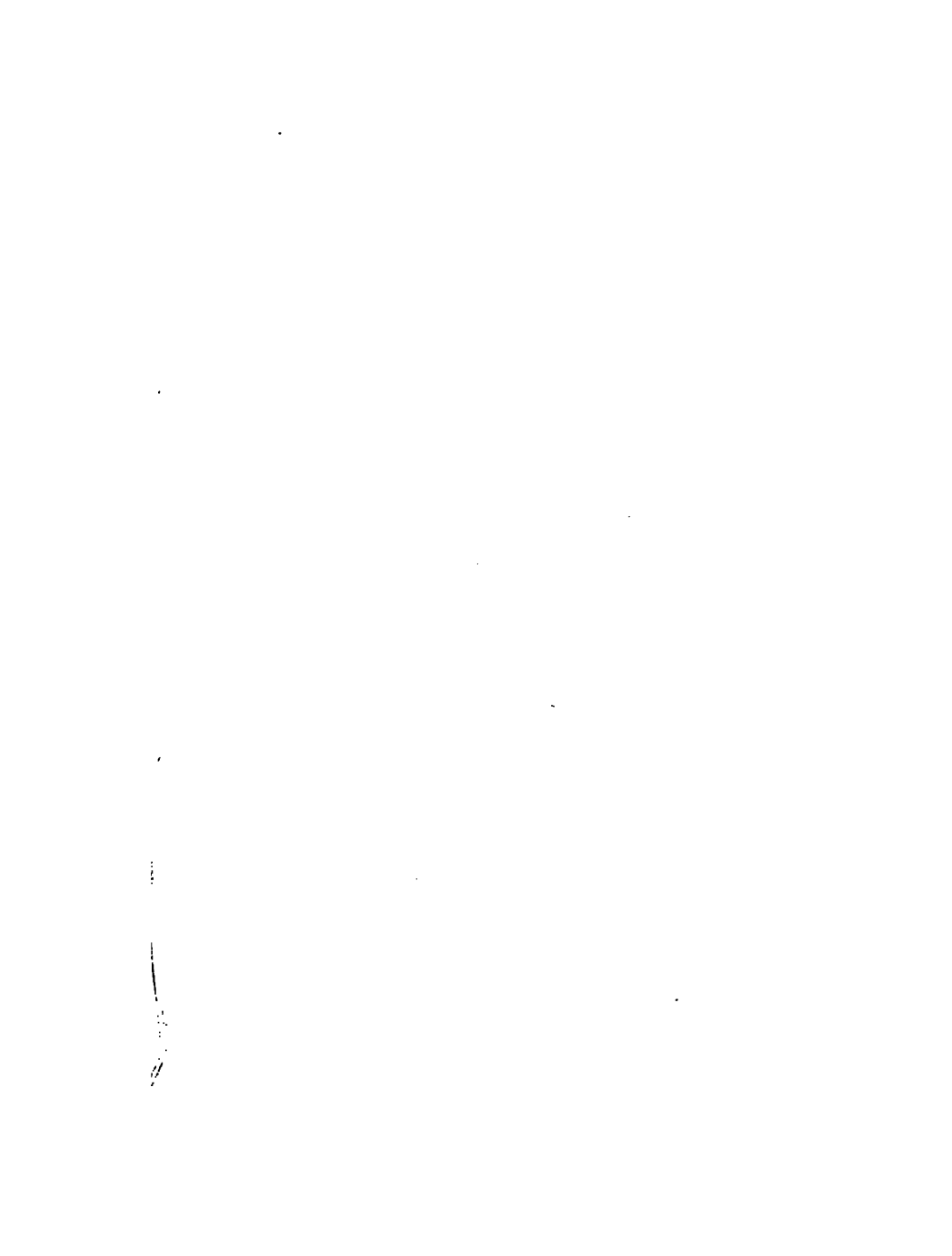
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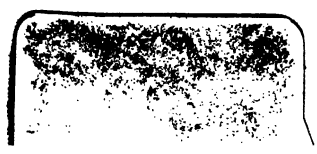
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